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NARRATIVE AND LYRIC POEMS

FOR STUDENTS

EDITED BY

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PREFACE

To stumble unexpectedly upon a poem, or a volume of poems, with the sudden thrill of discovery, to wander among the works of the poet "as one seeking the face of a friend in a crowd,"—this is the approach to poetry that all agree brings the happiest results. That poems may be profitably "studied," however, is not universally acknowledged. This is wholly natural; for treatment too vague is obviously likely to be unstimulating, and treatment too pedantic is sure to kill spontaneous interest. This volume is compiled with a full realization of these besetting dangers, yet in the conviction that poetry can be studied with profit. Furthermore, it attempts to give some concrete suggestions toward the realization of this ideal.

It should first be explained that the greatest encouragement for the compilation of these poems came from the recent action of the National Conference on College Entrance Examinations, introducing lyric and shorter narrative poems among the types of literature to be studied in the schools. I have based the contents of this volume, therefore, upon certain recommendations of the Conference,—the fourth Book of the Golden Treasury, a selected list of Browning's poems, and several narrative poems. Naturally, the

following of a list made out by others has resulted in a table of contents that does not represent in all cases my own free choice; but I have supplemented the poems recommended by the Conference with others,—all the old ballads, for example, and the poems in playful mood, in the hope that each user of the volume may find scope in which to choose and reject as he sees fit. These are the conditions, then; and the purpose is to suggest a way of approaching poetry. What this way is may best be understood by examining the plan of editing.

In the first place, I have arranged the poems in groups according to subject, or mood, or perhaps form,—a grouping that does not attempt to be wholly logical, but one which makes it easy for a reader who has found something that pleases him to look near it for more of the same kind. Is not the natural grouping of poems according to the thing that they express, rather than the writer or literary period that produced them? And is not the transition easier from a sonnet of Shakspere to one of Wordsworth than from Milton's sonnet, *On the Late Massacre in Piedmont* to *L'Allegro* or to Lovelace's *To Lucasta, on Going to the Wars?*

In the notes I have had a double purpose. I have tried to make the poems more real by telling how and when certain ones were written, or by recounting such circumstances as associate them interestingly with the lives of their authors. In the case of some of the most important poems I have introduced interpretation

comment, the aim of which—such as there is of it—is to be not so much a piecemeal explanation of details as an indication of some significant aspect of the poem as a whole. Even where, as in the longer poems, words and allusions must be explained, I have, whenever convenient, grouped details of a single kind together, so that the unity of impression may be impaired as little as possible.

Following the notes are a series of "Suggested Studies." These presuppose some familiarity with the poems individually, and point the way toward comparative study. Here generalization enters; and here, consequently, difficulty begins. But in most cases the generalization is either supplied or frankly indicated, and the student's object should be to verify it by the concrete instance. It is of little moment whether the student discovers his generalizations for himself: it is of the greatest importance that he realize that no generalization has meaning or validity for him unless he can test it concretely by his own experience. The studies suggested are few in number, but they can be supplemented or adapted freely at will.

Finally comes the "General Survey," in which are reviewed certain of the larger aspects of poetry illustrated by this volume. Its purpose is to lead to some understanding of a few simple principles of poetry,—its scope, its varieties, its ways of transmuting life into art. Discussion of these matters in the abstract, as matters of theory, may be plausible and interesting, but is not sufficient. It has seemed to

me that consideration of these broader principles, instead of being the introduction to the study of poetry, is in reality its final goal. Such consideration should come last, therefore, and be based on familiarity with an adequate body of poetry; more than that, the general principles should be shown to spring directly from the poems themselves. The poems can then illustrate and illuminate the principles, and show them to be not words, merely, but real ideas.

Is it necessary, in view of what has been said, to urge the need of personal tact and judgment in directing the study of poetry? If at any point interest fails, that point is the place to stop, or at least to pause and try to discover in what other direction natural interest leads. The poems themselves are the obvious starting-point: among them it is always possible to wander at will, "as one seeking the face of a friend in a crowd." If one does not find friends there, nothing is to be gained by trying to "study" poetry. If they are found, however, further intercourse with them is a matter of genuine human interest and pleasure.

S. S. S., Jr.

April 27, 1909.

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NARRATIVE POEMS

OLD BALLADS

SIR PATRICK SPENS

The king sits in Dumferling toune,
Drinking the blude-reid wine:
'O whar will I get guid sailor,
To sail this schip of mine?'

Up and spak an eldern knicht,
Sat at the kings richt kne:
'Sir Patrick Spence is the best sailor
That sails upon the se.'

The king has written a braid letter,
And signd it wi his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spence,
Was walking on the sand.

The first line that Sir Patrick red,
A loud lauch lauched he;
The next line that Sir Patrick red,
The teir blinded his ee.

'O wha is this has don this deid,
This ill deid don to me,
To send me out this time o' the yeir,
To sail upon the se?

'Mak hast, mak haste, my mirry men all,
Our guid schip sails the morne:'
'O say na sae, my master deir,
For I feir a deadlie storme.

'Late late yestreen I saw the new moone,
Wi the auld moone in hir arme,
And I feir, I feir, my deir master,
That we will cum to harme.'

O our Scots nobles wer richt laith
To weet their cork-heild schoone;
Bot lang owre a' the play wer playd,
Thair hats they swam aboone.

O lang, lang may their ladies sit,
Wi thair fans into their hand,
Or eir they se Sir Patrick Spence
Cum sailing to the land.

O lang, lang may the ladies stand,
Wi thair gold kems in their hair,
Waiting for thair ain deir lords,
For they'll se thame na mair.

Haf owre, haf owre to Aberdour,
It's fiftie fadom deip,
And thair lies guid Sir Patrick Spence,
Wi the Scots lords at his feit.

JOHNIE ARMSTRONG

There dwelt a man in faire Westmereland,
Jonnë Armestrong men did him call,
He had nither lands nor rents coming in,
Yet he kept eight score men in his hall.

He had horse and harness for them all,
Goodly steeds were all milke-white;
O the golden bands an about their necks,
And their weapons, they were all alike.

Newes then was brought unto the king
That there was sicke a won as hee,
That livëd lyke a bold out-law,
And robbëd all the north country.

The king he writt an a letter then,
A letter which was large and long;
He signëd it with his owne hand,
And he promised to doe him no wrong.

When this letter came Jonnë untill,
His heart it was as blythe as birds on the tree:
'Never was I sent for before any king,
My father, my grandfather, nor none but mee.

'And if wee goe the king before,
I would we went most orderly;
Every man of you shall have his scarlet cloak,
Laced with silver laces three.

'Every won of you shall have his velvett coat,
Laced with sillver lace so white;
O the golden bands an about your necks,
Black hatts, white feathers, all alyke.'

By the morrow morninge at ten of the clock,
Towards Edenburough gon was hee,
And with him all his eight score men;
Good lord, it was a goodly sight for to see!

When Jonnë came befower the king,
He fell downe on his knee;
'O pardon, my soveraine leige,' he said,
'O pardon my eight score men and mee!'

'Thou shalt have no pardon, thou traytor strong,
For thy eight score men nor thee;

For to-morrow morning by ten of the clock,
Both thou and them shall hang on the gallow-tree.'

But Jonnë looke'd over his left shoulder,
Good Lord, what a grevious look looked hee!
Saying, 'Asking grace of a graceles face—
Why there is none for you nor me.'

But Jonnë had a bright sword by his side,
And it was made of the mettle so free,
That had not the king stept his foot aside,
He had smitten his head from his faire boddë.

Saying, 'Fight on, my merry men all,
And see that none of you be taine;
For rather then men shall say we were hange'd,
Let them report how we were slaine.'

Then, God wott, faire Eddenburrough rose,
And so besett poore Jonnë rounde,
That fowerscore and tenn of Jonnës best men
Lay gasping all upon the ground.

Then like a mad man Jonnë laide about,
And like a mad man then fought hee,
Untill a falce Scot came Jonnë behinde,
And runn him through the faire boddee.

Saying, 'Fight on, my merry men all,
I am a little hurt, but I am not slain;
I will lay me down for to bleed a while,
Then I'le rise and fight with you again.'

Newes then was brought to young Jonnë Armestrong,
As he stood by his nurses knee,
Who vowed if ere he live'd for to be a man,
O the treacherous Scots revengd hee'd be.

THE BATTLE OF OTTERBURN

It fell about the Lammas tide,
When the muir-men win their hay,
The doughty Douglas bound him to ride
Into England, to drive a prey.

He chose the Gordons and the Græmes,
With them the Lindesays, light and gay;
But the Jardines wald not with him ride,
And they rue it to this day.

And he has burnd the dales of Tyne,
And part of Bambrough shire,
And three good towers on Reidswire fells,
He left them all on fire.

And he marchd up to Newcastle,
And rode it round about:
'O wha's the lord of this castle?
Or wha's the lady o't?'

But up spake proud Lord Percy then,
And O but he spake hie!
I am the lord of this castle,
My wife's the lady gay.

'If thou'rt the lord of this castle,
Sae weel it pleases me,
For, ere I cross the Border fells,
The tane of us shall die.'

He took a lang spear in his hand,
Shod with the metal free,
And for to meet the Douglas there
He rode right furiouslie.

But O how pale his lady lookd,
Frae aff the castle-wa,
When down before the Scottish spear
She saw proud Percy fa.

'Had we twa been upon the green,
And never an eye to see,
I wad hae had you, flesh and fell;
But your sword sall gae wi me.'

'But gae ye up to Otterbourne,
And, wait there dayis three,
And, if I come not ere three dayis end,
A fause knight ca ye me.'

'The Otterbourne's a bonnie burn;
'Tis pleasant there to be;
But there is nought at Otterbourne
To feed my men and me.

'The deer rins wild on hill and dale,
The birds fly wild from tree to tree;
But there is neither bread nor kale
To fend my men and me.

'Yet I will stay at Otterbourne,
Where you shall welcome be;
And, if ye come not at three dayis end,
A fause lord I'll ca thee.'

'Thither will I come,' proud Percy said,
'By the might of Our Ladye;'
'There will I bide thee,' said the Douglas,
'My troth I plight to thee.'

They lighted high on Otterbourne,
Upon the bent sae brown;

They lighted high on Otterbourne,
And threw their pallions down.

And he that had a bonnie boy,
Sent out his horse to grass;
And he that had not a bonnie boy,
His ain servant he was.

But up then spake a little page,
Before the peep of dawn:
'O waken ye, waken ye, my good lord,
For Percy's hard at hand.'

'Ye lie, ye lie, ye liar loud!
Sae loud I hear ye lie:
For Percy had not men yestreen
To dight my men and me.

'But I have dreamd a dreary dream,
Beyond the Isle of Sky;
I saw a dead man win a fight,
And I think that man was I.'

He belted on his guid braid sword,
And to the field he ran,
But he forgot the helmet good,
That should have kept his brain.

When Percy wi the Douglas met,
I wat he was fu fain;
They swakked their swords, till sair they swat,
And the blood ran down like rain.

But Percy with his good broad sword,
That could so sharply wound,
Has wounded Douglas on the brow,
Till he fell to the ground.

Then he calld on his little foot-page,
And said, Run speedilie,
And fetch my ain dear sister's son,
Sir Hugh Montgomery.

'My nephew good,' the Douglas said,
'What recks the death of ane!
Last night I dreamd a dreary dream,
And I ken the day's thy ain.

'My wound is deep; I fain would sleep;
Take thou the vanguard of the three,
And hide me by the braken-bush,
That grows on yonder lilye lee.

'O bury me by the braken-bush,
Beneath the blooming brier;
Let never living mortal ken
That ere a kindly Scot lies here.'

He lifted up that noble lord,
Wi the saut tear in his ee;
He hid him in the braken-bush,
That his merrie men might not see.

The moon was clear, the day drew near,
The spears in flinders flew,
But mony a gallant Englishman
Ere day the Scotsmen slew.

The Gordons good, in English blood
They steepd their hose and shoon;
The Lindsays flew like fire about,
Till all the fray was done.

The Percy and Montgomery met,
That either of other were fain;

They swapped swords, and they twa swat,
And aye the blood ran down between.

'Now yield thee, yield thee, Percy,' he said,
'Or else I vow I'll lay thee low!'
'To whom must I yield,' quoth Earl Percy,
'Now that I see it must be so?'

'Thou shalt not yield to lord nor loun,
Nor yet shalt thou yield to me;
But yield thee to the braken-bush,
That grows upon yon lilye lee.'

'I will not yield to a braken-bush,
Nor yet will I yield to a brier;
But I would yield to Earl Douglas,
Or Sir Hugh the Montgomery, if he were here.'

As soon as he knew it was Montgomery,
He struck his sword's point in the gronde;
The Montgomery was a courteous knight,
And quickly took him by the honde.

This deed was done at the Otterbourne,
About the breaking of the day;
Earl Douglas was buried at the braken-bush,
And the Percy led captive away.

ROBIN HOOD'S DEATH

When Robin Hood and Little John
Down a down a down a down
Went oer yon bank of broom,
Said Robin Hood bold to Little John,
We have shot for many a pound.
Hey, etc.

But I am not able to shoot one shot more,
My broad arrows will not flee;
But I have a cousin lives down below,
Please God, she will bleed me.

Now Robin he is to fair Kirkly gone,
As fast as he can win;
But before he came there, as we do hear,
He was taken very ill.

And when he came to fair Kirkly-hall,
He knockd all at the ring,
But none was so ready as his cousin herself
For to let bold Robin in.

'Will you please to sit down, cousin Robin,' she said,
'And drink some beer with me?'
'No, I will neither eat nor drink,
Till I am blooded by thee.'

'Well, I have a room, cousin Robin,' she said,
'Which you did never see,
And if you please to walk therein,
You blooded by me shall be.'

She took him by the lily-white hand,
And led him to a private room,
And there she blooded bold Robin Hood,
While one drop of blood would run down.

She blooded him in a vein of the arm,
And locked him up in the room;
There did he bleed all the live-long day,
Until the next day at noon.

He then bethought him of a casement there,
Thinking for to get down;

But was so weak he could not leap,
He could not get him down.

He then bethought him of his bugle-horn,
Which hung low down to his knee;
He set his horn unto his mouth,
And blew out weak blasts three.

Then Little John, when hearing him,
As he sat under the tree,
'I fear my master is now near dead,
He blows so wearily.'

Then Little John to fair Kirkly is gone,
As fast as he can dree;
But when he came to Kirkly-hall,
He broke locks two or three:

Until he came bold Robin to see,
Then he fell on his knee;
'A boon, a boon,' cries Little John,
'Master, I beg of thee.'

'What is that boon,' said Robin Hood,
'Little John, thou begs of me?'
'It is to burn fair Kirkly-hall,
And all their nunnery.'

'Now nay, now nay,' quoth Robin Hood,
'That boon I'll not grant thee;
I never hurt woman in all my life,
Nor men in woman's company.

'I never hurt fair maid in all my time,
Nor at mine end shall it be;
But give me my bent bow in my hand,
And a broad arrow I'll let flee;

And where this arrow is taken up,
There shall my grave digged be.

'Lay me a green sod under my head,
And another at my feet;
And lay my bent bow by my side,
Which was my music sweet;
And make my grave of gravel and green,
Which is most right and meet.

'Let me have length and breadth enough,
With a green sod under my head;
That they may say, when I am dead,
Here lies bold Robin Hood.'

These words they readily granted him,
Which did bold Robin please:
And there they buried bold Robin Hood,
Within the fair Kirklys.

THE TWA CORBIES

As I was walking all alane,
I heard twa corbies making a mane;
The tane unto the t'other say,
'Where sall we gang and dine to-day?'

'In behint yon auld fail dyke,
I wot there lies a new slain knight;
And naebody kens that he lies there,
But his hawk, his hound, and lady fair.

'His hound is to the hunting gane,
His hawk to fetch the wild-fowl hame,
His lady's ta'en another mate,
So we may mak our dinner sweet.

'Ye'll sit on his white hause-bane,
And I'll pike out his bonny blue een;
Wi ae lock o his gowden hair
We'll theek our nest when it grows bare.

'Mony a one for him makes mane,
But nane sall ken where he is gane;
Oer his white banes, when they are bare,
The wind sall blaw for evermair.'

YOUNG WATERS

About Yule, when the wind blew cule,
And the round tables began,
A there is cum to our king's court
Mony a well-favord man.

The queen luikt owre the castle-wa,
Beheld baith dale and down,
And there she saw young Waters
Come riding to the town.

His footmen they did rin before,
His horsemen rade behind;
And mantel of the burning gowd
Did keip him frae the wind.

Gowden-graithd his horse before,
And siller-shod behind;
The horse young Waters rade upon
Was fleeter than the wind.

Out then spack a wylie lord,
Unto the queen said he,
'O tell me wha's the fairest face
Rides in the company?'

'I've sene lord, and I've sene laird,
And knights of high degree,
Bot a fairer face than young Waters
Mine eyne did never see.'

Out then spack the jealous king,
And an angry man was he:
'O if he had been twice as fair,
You micht have excepted me.'

'You're neither laird nor lord,' she says,
'Bot the king that wears the crown;
There is not a knight in fair Scotland
But to thee maun bow down.'

For a' that she could do or say,
Appeasd he wad nae bee,
Bot for the words which she had said,
Young Waters he maun die.

They hae taen young Waters,
And put fetters to his feet;
They hae taen young Waters,
And thrown him in dungeon deep.

'Aft have I ridden thro Stirling town
In the wind both and the weit;
Bot I neir rade thro Stirling town
Wi' fetters at my feet.

'Aft have I ridden thro Stirling town
In the wind both and the rain;
Bot I neir rade thro Stirling town
Neir to return again.'

They hae taen to the heiding-hill
His young son in his craddle,

And they hae taen to the heiding-hill
His horse both and his saddle.

They hae taen to the heiding-hill
His lady fair to see,
And for the words the queen had spoke
Young Waters he did die.

LORD RANDAL

'O WHERE hae ye been, Lord Randal, my son?
O where hae ye been, my handsome young man?'
'I hae been to the wild wood; mother, make my bed soon;
For I'm weary wi hunting, and fain wald lie down.'

'Where gat ye your dinner, Lord Randal, my son?
Where gat ye your dinner, my handsome young man?'
'I din'd wi my true-love; mother, make my bed soon;
For I'm weary wi hunting, and fain wald lie down.'

'What gat ye to your dinner, Lord Randal, my son?
What gat ye to your dinner, my handsome young man?'
'I gat eels boiled in broo; mother, make my bed soon;
For I'm weary wi hunting, and fain wald lie down.'

'What became of your bloodhounds, Lord Randal, my son?
What became of your bloodhounds, my handsome young man?'
'O they swelld and they died; mother, make my bed soon;
For I'm weary wi hunting, and fain wald lie down.'

'O I fear ye are poisond, Lord Randal, my son!
O I fear ye are poisond, my handsome young man!'
'O yes! I am poisond; mother, make my bed soon;
For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain wald lie down.'

THE BAILIFF'S DAUGHTER OF ISLINGTON

THERE was a youth, and a well belovd youth,
And he was a esquire's son,
He loved the bayliff's daughter dear,
That lived in Islington.

She was coy, and she would not believe
That he did love her so,
No, nor at any time she would
Any countenance to him show.

But when his friends did understand
His fond and foolish mind,
They sent him up to fair London,
An apprentice for to bind.

And when he had been seven long years,
And his love he had not seen,
"Many a tear have I shed for her sake
When she little thought of me."

All the maids of Islington
Went forth to sport and play;
All but the bayliff's daughter dear;
She secretly stole away.

She put off her gown of gray,
And put on her puggish attire;
She's up to fair London gone,
Her true-love to require.

As she went along the road,
The weather being hot and dry,
There was she aware of her true-love,
At length came riding by.

She stept to him, as red as any rose,
And took him by the bridle-ring:
"I pray you, kind sir, give me one penny
To ease my weary limb."

"I prithee, sweetheart, canst thou tell me
Where that thou wast born?"
"At Islington, kind sir," said she,
"Where I have had many a scorn."

"I prithee, sweetheart, canst thou tell me
Whether thou dost know
The bayliff's daughter of Islington?"
"She is dead, sir, long ago."

"Then will I sell my goodly steed,
My saddle and my bow;
I will into some far countrey,
Where no man doth me know."

"O stay, O stay, thou goodly youth!
She is alive, she is not dead;
Here she standeth by thy side,
And is ready to be thy bride."

"O farewel grief, and welcome joy,
Ten thousand times and more!
For now I have seen mine own true love,
That I thought I should have seen no more."

LATE BALLADS

LORD ULLIN'S DAUGHTER

A CHIEFTAIN to the Highlands bound
Cries 'Boatman, do not tarry!
And I'll give thee a silver pound
To row us o'er the ferry!'

'Now who be ye, would cross Lochgyle,
This dark and stormy water?'
'O I'm the chief of Ulva's isle,
And this, Lord Ullin's daughter.

'And fast before her father's men
Three days we've fled together,
For should he find us in the glen,
My blood would stain the heather.

'His horsemen hard behind us ride—
Should they our steps discover,
Then who will cheer my bonny bride,
When they have slain her lover?'

Out spoke the hardy Highland wight,
'I'll go, my chief, I'm ready:
It is not for your silver bright,
But for your winsome lady:—

'And by my word! the bonny bird
In danger shall not tarry;
So though the waves are raging white
I'll row you o'er the ferry.'

By this the storm grew loud apace,
The water-wraith was shrieking;
And in the scowl of Heaven each face
Grew dark as they were speaking.

But still as wilder blew the wind,
And as the night grew drearer,
Adown the glen rode arméd men,
Their trampling sounded nearer.

'O haste thee, haste!' the lady cries,
'Though tempests round us gather;
I'll meet the raging of the skies,
But not an angry father.'

The boat has left a stormy land,
A stormy sea before her,—
When, oh! too strong for human hand
The tempest gather'd o'er her.

And still they row'd amidst the roar
Of waters fast prevailing:
Lord Ullin reach'd that fatal shore,—
His wrath was changed to wailing.

For, sore dismay'd, through storm and shade
His child he did discover:—
One lovely hand she stretch'd for aid,
And one was round her lover.

'Come back! come back!' he cried in grief,
'Across this stormy water:
And I'll forgive your Highland chief,
My daughter!—Oh, my daughter!'

'Twas vain: the loud waves lash'd the shore,
Return or aid preventing:
The waters wild went o'er his child,
And he was left lamenting.

T. Campbell.

LADY CLARE

It was the time when lilies blow
And clouds are highest up in air,
Lord Ronald brought a lily-white doe
To give his cousin, Lady Clare.

I trow they did not part in scorn:
Lovers long-betroth'd were they;
They two will wed the morrow morn;
God's blessing on the day!

"He does not love me for my birth,
Nor for my lands so broad and fair;
He loves me for my own true worth,
And that is well," said Lady Clare.

In there came old Alice the nurse,
Said, "Who was this that went from thee?"
"It was my cousin," said Lady Clare,
"To-morrow he weds with me."

"O, God be thank'd!" said Alice the nurse,
"That all comes round so just and fair;
Lord Ronald is heir of all your lands,
And you are not the Lady Clare."

"Are ye out of your mind, my nurse, my nurse?"
Said Lady Clare, "that ye speak so wild?"
"As God's above," said Alice the nurse,
"I speak the truth; you are my child,

"The old Earl's daughter died at my breast;
I speak the truth, as I live by bread!
I buried her like my own sweet child,
And put my child in her stead."

"Falsely, falsely have ye done,
O mother," she said, "if this be true,
To keep the best man under the sun
So many years from his due."

"Nay now, my child," said Alice the nurse,
"But keep the secret for your life,
And all you have will be Lord Ronald's,
When you are man and wife."

"If I'm a beggar born," she said,
"I will speak out, for I dare not lie.
Pull off, pull off, the broach of gold,
And fling the diamond necklace by."

"Nay now, my child," said Alice the nurse,
"But keep the secret all ye can."
She said, "Not so; but I will know
If there be any faith in man."

"Nay now, what faith?" said Alice the nurse,
"The man will cleave unto his right."
"And he shall have it," the lady replied,
"Tho' I should die to-night."

"Yet give one kiss to your mother dear!
Alas, my child, I sinn'd for thee."
"O mother, mother, mother," she said,
"So strange it seems to me.

"Yet here's a kiss for my mother dear,
My mother dear, if this be so,

And lay your hand upon my head,
And bless me, mother, ere I go."

She clad herself in a russet gown,
She was no longer Lady Clare;
She went by dale, and she went by down,
With a single rose in her hair.

The lily-white doe Lord Ronald had brought
Leapt up from where she lay,
Dropt her head in the maiden's hand,
And follow'd her all the way.

Down stept Lord Ronald from his tower:
"O Lady Clare, you shame your worth!
Why come you drest like a village maid,
That are the flower of the earth?"

"If I come drest like a village maid,
I am but as my fortunes are;
I am a beggar born," she said,
"And not the Lady Clare."

"Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,
"For I am yours in word and in deed.
Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,
"Your riddle is hard to read."

O and proudly stood she up!
Her heart within her did not fail;
She look'd into Lord Ronald's eyes,
And told him all her nurse's tale.

He laugh'd a laugh of merry scorn;
He turn'd, and kiss'd her where she stood:
"If you are not the heiress born,
And I," said he, "the next in blood—

"If you are not the heiress born
And I," said he, "the lawful heir,
We two will wed to-morrow morn,
And you shall still be Lady Clare."

A. Tennyson.

LUCY GRAY

Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray:
And when I cross'd the wild,
I chanced to see at break of day
The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;
She dwelt on a wide moor,
The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green;
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen.

'To-night will be a stormy night—
You to the town must go;
And take a lantern, Child, to light
Your mother through the snow.'

'That, Father! will I gladly do:
'Tis scarcely afternoon—
The minster-clock has just struck two,
And yonder is the moon!'

At this the father raised his hook,
And snapp'd a faggot-band;
He plied his work;—and Lucy took
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe:
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time:
She wander'd up and down;
And many a hill did Lucy climb:
But never reach'd the town.

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide;
But there was neither sound nor sight
To serve them for a guide.

At day-break on a hill they stood
That overlook'd the moor;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood
A furlong from their door.

They wept—and, turning homeward, cried
'In heaven we all shall meet!'
—When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill's edge
They track'd the footmarks small;
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,
And by the long stone-wall:

And then an open field they cross'd:
The marks were still the same;
They track'd them on, nor ever lost;
And to the bridge they came:

They follow'd from the snowy bank
Those footmarks, one by one,

Into the middle of the plank;
And further there were none!

—Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind;
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind.

W. Wordsworth.

THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS *

It was the schooner Hesperus,
That sailed the wintry sea;
And the skipper had taken his little daughter,
To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax,
Her cheeks like the dawn of day,
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,
That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,
His pipe was in his mouth,
And he watched how the veering flaw did blow
The smoke now West, now South.

Then up and spake an old sailor,
Had sailed to the Spanish Main,
"I pray thee, put into yonder port,
For I fear a hurricane.

* By permission of Houghton Mifflin Company.

"Last night, the moon had a golden ring,
And to-night no moon we see!"
The skipper, he blew a whiff from his pipe,
And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and colder blew the wind,
A gale from the Northeast,
The snow fell hissing in the brine,
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain
The vessel in its strength;
She shuddered and paused, like a frighted steed,
Then leaped her cable's length.

"Come hither! come hither! my little daughter,
And do not tremble so;
For I can weather the roughest gale
That ever wind did blow."

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat
Against the stinging blast;
He cut a rope from a broken spar,
And bound her to the mast.

"O father! I hear the church bells ring;
Oh, say, what may it be?"
"'Tis a fog bell on a rock-bound coast!"—
And he steered for the open sea.

"O father! I hear the sound of guns;
Oh, say, what may it be?"
"Some ship in distress, that cannot live
In such an angry sea!"

"O father! I see the gleaming light;
Oh, say, what may it be?"

But the father answered never a word,
A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,
With his face turned to the skies,
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow
On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed
That savëd she might be;
And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave,
On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,
Through the whistling sleet and snow,
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept
Tow'rds the reef of Norman's Woe.

And ever the fitful gusts between
A sound came from the land;
It was the sound of the trampling surf
On the rocks and the hard sea sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,
She drifted a dreary wreck,
And a whooping billow swept the crew
Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves
Looked soft as carded wool,
But the cruel rocks, they gored her side
Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,
With the masts went by the board;
Like a vessel of glass, she strove and sank,
Ho! ho! the breakers roared!

At daybreak on the black sea beach,
A fisherman stood aghast,
To see the form of a maiden fair,
Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,
The salt tears in her eyes;
And he saw her hair, like the brown seaweed
On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the Hesperus,
In the midnight and the snow!
Christ save us all from a death like this,
On the reef of Norman's Woe!

H. W. Longfellow.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

'O WHAT can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.

'O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms!
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

'I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever-dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too.'

'I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful—a faery's child,

Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

'I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She look'd at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

'I set her on my pacing steed
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song.

'She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild and manna-dew,
And sure in language strange she said
"I love thee true."

'She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sigh'd full sore;
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
With kisses four.

'And there she lullèd me asleep,
And there I dream'd—Ah! woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dream'd
On the cold hill's side.

'I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all:
They cried—"La belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall!"

'I saw their starved lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gapèd wide,
And I awoke and found me here
On the cold hill's side.

'And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.'

J. Keats.

EARL MARCH LOOK'D ON HIS DYING CHILD

Earl March look'd on his dying child,
And, smit with grief to view her—
The youth, he cried, whom I exiled
Shall be restored to woo her.

She's at the window many an hour
His coming to discover:
And he look'd up to Ellen's bower
And she look'd on her lover—

But ah! so pale, he knew her not,
Though her smile on him was dwelling—
And am I then forgot—forgot?
It broke the heart of Ellen.

In vain he weeps, in vain he sighs,
Her cheek is cold as ashes;
Nor love's own kiss shall wake those eyes
To lift their silken lashes.

T. Campbell.

THE PRIDE OF YOUTH

Proud Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.

'Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me?'
—'When six braw gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye.'

'Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly?'
—'The gray-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.

'The glowworm o'er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady;
The owl from the steeple sing
Welcome, proud lady.'

Sir W. Scott.

ROSABELLE

O LISTEN, listen, ladies gay!
No haughty feat of arms I tell;
Soft is the note, and sad the lay
That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.

'Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew!
And, gentle ladye, deign to stay!
Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,
Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.

'The blackening wave is edged with white;
To inch and rock the sea-mews fly;
The fishers have heard the Water-Sprite,
Whose screams forebode that wreck is nigh.

'Last night the gifted Seer did view
A wet shroud swathed round ladye gay;
Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch;
Why cross the gloomy firth to-day?'

'Tis not because Lord Lindesay's heir
To-night at Roslin leads the ball,
But that my ladye-mother there
Sits lonely in her castle-hall.

'Tis not because the ring they ride,
And Lindesay at the ring rides well,
But that my sire the wine will chide
If 'tis not fill'd by Rosabelle.'

—O'er Roslin all that dreary night
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam;
'Twas broader than the watch-fire's light,
And redder than the bright moonbeam.

It glared on Roslin's castled rock,
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen;
'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
And seen from cavern'd Hawthornden.

Seem'd all on fire that chapel proud
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffin'd lie,
Each Baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply.

Seem'd all on fire within, around,
Deep sacristy and altar's pale;
Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
And glimmer'd all the dead men's mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—
So still they blaze, when fate is nigh
The lordly line of high Saint Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold—
Lie buried within that proud chapelle;

Each one the holy vault doth hold—
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle.

And each Saint Clair was buried there,
With candle, with book, and with knell;
But the sea-caves rung, and the wild winds sung
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.

Sir W. Scott.

SHORT NARRATIVE POEMS

LOVE

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I lay,
Beside the ruin'd tower.

The moonshine stealing o'er the scene
Had blended with the lights of eve;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve!

She lean'd against the arméd man,
The statue of the arméd knight;
She stood and listen'd to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!
She loves me best, whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

I play'd a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listen'd with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;
For well she knew, I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand;
And that for ten long years he woo'd
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined: and ah!
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love
Interpreted my own.

She listen'd with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;
And she forgave me, that I gazed
Too fondly on her face!

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,
And that he cross'd the mountain-woods,
Nor rested day nor night;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade,—

There came and look'd him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright;
And that he knew it was a Fiend,
This miserable Knight!

And that unknowing what he did,
He leap'd amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
The Lady of the Land;—

And how she wept, and clasp'd his knees;
And how she tended him in vain—
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain;—

And that she nursed him in a cave,
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
A dying man he lay;—

His dying words—but when I reach'd
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturb'd her soul with pity!

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrill'd my guileless Genevieve;
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherish'd long!

She wept with pity and delight,
She blush'd with love, and virgin shame;
And like the murmur of a dream,
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved—she stepp'd aside,
As conscious of my look she stept—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye
She fled to me and wept.

She half inclosed me with her arms,
She press'd me with a meek embrace;
And bending back her head, look'd up,
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art
That I might rather feel, than see,
The swelling of her heart.

I calm'd her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride;
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous Bride.

S. T. Coleridge.

LOCHINVAR

Oh, young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide Border his steed was the best;
And save his good broad sword he weapons had none.
He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was Knight like the young Lochinvar.

He stayed not for brake, and he stopped not for stone;
He swam the Eske river where ford there was none;
But, ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
The bride had consented, the gallant came late;
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby hall,
'Mong bridesmen and kinsmen, and brothers and all:
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword
(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word),
"Oh, come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?"

"I long wooed your daughter, my suit you denied;—
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide;
And now I am come, with this lost love of mine
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kissed the goblet; the knight took it up:
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand ere her mother could bar,—
"Now tread we a measure!" said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume;
And the bride-maidens whispered, "'Twere better by far
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar."

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reached the hall door and the charger stood near;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung!
"She is won! we are gone, over bank, bush, and scaur!
They'll have fleet steeds that follow!" quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Græmes of the Netherby clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran;
There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee;
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

Sir W. Scott.

THE SANDS OF DEE

"O Mary, go and call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee."
The western wind was wild and dark wi' foam,
And all alone went she.

The western tide crept up along the sand,
And o'er and o'er the sand,
And round and round the sand,
As far as eye could see.
The rolling mist came down and hid the land—
And never home came she.

"Oh! is it weed, or fish, or floating hair—
A tress o' golden hair,
A drownèd maiden's hair
Above the nets at sea?
Was never salmon yet that shone so fair
Among the stakes on Dee."

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,
The cruel crawling foam,
The cruel hungry foam,
To her grave beside the sea:
But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee!

C. Kingsley.

HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM GHENT TO AIX

I SPRANG to the stirrup, and Joris, and he;
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three;
"Good speed!" cried the watch as the gate-bolts undrew;
"Speed!" echoed the wall to us galloping through;
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,
And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

Not a word to each other; we kept the great pace
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our place;
I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,
Then shortened each stirrup, and set the pique right,
Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chained slacker the bit,
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

'Twas moonset at starting; but while we drew near
Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned clear;
At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see;
At Düffeld, 'twas morning as plain as could be;
And from Mecheln church-steeple we heard the half-chime,
So Joris broke silence with, "Yet there is time!"

At Aershot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,
And against him the cattle stood black every one,
To stare through the mist at us galloping past,
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,
With resolute shoulders, each butting away
The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray:

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent back
For my voice, and the other pricked out on his track;
And one eye's black intelligence,—ever that glance
O'er its white edge at me, his own master, askance!
And the thick heavy spume-flakes, which aye and anon
His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned; and cried Joris, "Stay spur!
Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her,
We'll remember at Aix"—for one heard the quick wheeze
Of her chest, saw the stretched neck and staggering knees,
And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,
As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

So, we were left galloping, Joris and I,
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky;
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble like chaff;
Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,
And "Gallop," gasped Joris, "for Aix is in sight!"

"How they'll greet us!"—and all in a moment his roan
Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as a stone;
And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight
Of the news which alone could save Aix from her fate,
With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buffcoat, each holster let fall,
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,
Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse without peer;
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise, bad or good,
Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.

And all I remember is—friends flocking round
As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees on the ground;
And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,
As I poured down his throat our last measure of wine,
Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
Was no more than his due who brought good news from
Ghent.

R. Browning.

LAODAMÍA

'With sacrifice before the rising morn
Vows have I made by fruitless hope inspired;
And from the infernal Gods, 'mid shades forlorn
Of night, my slaughtered Lord have I required:
Celestial pity I again implore;—
Restore him to my sight—great Jove, restore!'

So speaking, and by fervent love endowed
With faith, the Suppliant heavenward lifts her hands;
While, like the sun emerging from a cloud,
Her countenance brightens—and her eye expands;
Her bosom heaves and spreads, her stature grows;
And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror! what hath she perceived?—O joy!
What doth she look on?—whom doth she behold?
Her Hero slain upon the beach of Troy?
His vital presence? his corporeal mould?
It is—if sense deceive her not—'tis He!
And a God leads him, wingèd Mercury!

Mild Hermes spake—and touched her with his wand
That calms all fear: 'Such grace hath crowned thy prayer,
Laodamía! that at Jove's command
Thy Husband walks the paths of upper air:
He comes to tarry with thee three hours' space;
Accept the gift, behold him face to face!'

Forth sprang the impassioned Queen her Lord to clasp;
Again that consummation she essayed:
But unsubstantial Form eludes her grasp
As often as that eager grasp was made.
The Phantom parts—but parts to re-unite,
And re-assume his place before her sight.

'Protesiláus, lo! thy guide is gone!
Confirm, I pray, the vision with thy voice:
This is our palace,—yonder is thy throne;
Speak, and the floor thou tread'st on will rejoice.
Not to appal me have the gods bestowed
This precious boon; and blest a sad abode.'

'Great Jove, Laodamía! doth not leave
His gifts imperfect:—Spectre though I be,
I am not sent to scare thee or deceive;
But in reward of thy fidelity.
And something also did my worth obtain;
For fearless virtue bringeth boundless gain.

'Thou knowest, the Delphic oracle foretold
That the first Greek who touched the Trojan strand
Should die; but me the threat could not withhold:
A generous cause a victim did demand;
And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain;
A self-devoted chief—by Hector slain.'

'Supreme of Heroes—bravest, noblest, best!
Thy matchless courage I bewail no more,
Which then, when tens of thousands were deprest
By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal shore;
Thou found'st—and I forgive thee—here thou art—
A nobler counsellor than my poor heart.

'But thou, though capable of sternest deed,
Wert kind as resolute, and good as brave;
And he, whose power restores thee, hath decreed
Thou should'st elude the malice of the grave:
Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair
As when their breath enriched Thessalian air.

'No Spectre greets me,—no vain Shadow this:
Come, blooming Hero, place thee by my side!

Give, on this well-known couch, one nuptial kiss
To me, this day, a second time thy bride!'
Jove frowned in heaven: the conscious Parcæ threw
Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

'This visage tells thee that my doom is past:
Nor should the change be mourned, even if the joys
Of sense were able to return as fast
And surely as they vanish. Earth destroys
Those raptures duly—Erebus disdains:
Calm pleasures there abide—majestic pains.

'Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control
Rebellious passion; for the Gods approve
The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul;
A fervent, not ungovernable, love.
Thy transports moderate; and meekly mourn
When I depart, for brief is my sojourn—'

'Ah, wherefore?—Did not Hercules by force
Wrest from the guardian Monster of the tomb
Alcestis, a reanimated corse,
Given back to dwell on earth in vernal bloom?
Medea's spells dispersed the weight of years,
And Æson stood a youth 'mid youthful peers.

'The Gods to us are merciful—and they
Yet further may relent: for mightier far
Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the sway
Of magic potent over sun and star,
Is love, though oft to agony distrest,
And though his favourite seat be feeble woman's breast.

'But if thou goest, I follow—' 'Peace!' he said,—
She looked upon him and was calmed and cheered;
The ghastly colour from his lips had fled;
In his deportment, shape, and mien, appeared

Elysian beauty, melancholy grace,
Brought from a pensive though a happy place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits feel
In worlds whose course is equable and pure;
No fears to beat away—no strife to heal—
The past unsighed for, and the future sure;
Spake of heroic arts in graver mood
Revived, with finer harmony pursued;

Of all that is most beauteous—imaged there
In happier beauty; more pellucid streams,
An ampler ether, a diviner air,
And fields invested with purpureal gleams;
Climes which the sun, who sheds the brightest day
Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the Soul shall enter which hath earned
That privilege by virtue.—'Ill,' said he,
'The end of man's existence I discerned,
Who from ignoble games and revelry
Could draw, when we had parted, vain delight,
While tears were thy best pastime, day and night;

'And while my youthful peers before my eyes
(Each hero following his peculiar bent)
Prepared themselves for glorious enterprise
By martial sports,—or, seated in the tent,
Chieftains and kings in council were detained;
What time the fleet at Aulis lay enchained.

'The wished-for wind was given;—I then revolved
The oracle, upon the silent sea;
And, if no worthier led the way, resolved
That, of a thousand vessels, mine should be
The foremost prow in pressing to the strand,—
Mine the first blood that tinged the Trojan sand.

'Yet bitter, oft-times bitter, was the pang
When of thy loss I thought, belovèd Wife!
On thee too fondly did my memory hang,
And on the joys we shared in mortal life,—
The paths which we had trod—these fountains, flowers,
My new-planned cities, and unfinished towers.

'But should suspense permit the Foe to cry,
"Behold they tremble!—haughty their array,
Yet of their number no one dares to die?"
In soul I swept the indignity away:
Old frailties then recurred:—but lofty thought,
In act embodied, my deliverance wrought.

'And Thou, though strong in love, art all too weak
In reason, in self-government too slow;
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek
Our blest re-union in the shades below.
The invisible world with thee hath sympathised;
Be thy affections raised and solemnised.

'Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend—
Seeking a higher object. Love was given,
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end;
For this the passion to excess was driven—
That self might be annulled: her bondage prove
The fetters of a dream, opposed to love.'—

Aloud she shrieked! for Hermes re-appears!
Round the dear Shade she would have clung—'tis vain:
The hours are past—too brief had they been years;
And him no mortal effort can detain:
Swift, toward the realms that know not earthly day,
He through the portal takes his silent way,
And on the palace-floor a lifeless corse She lay.

Thus, all in vain exhorted and reproved,
She perished; and, as for a wilful crime,
By the just Gods whom no weak pity moved,
Was doomed to wear out her appointed time,
Apart from happy Ghosts, that gather flowers
Of blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers.

—Yet tears to human suffering are due;
And mortal hopes defeated and o'erthrown
Are mourned by man, and not by man alone,
As fondly he believes.—Upon the side
Of Hellespont (such faith was entertained)
A knot of spiry trees for ages grew
From out the tomb of him for whom she died;
And ever, when such stature they had gained
That Ilium's walls were subject to their view,
The trees' tall summits withered at the sight;
A constant interchange of growth and blight!

W. Wordsworth.

THE OUTLAW

O Brignall banks are wild and fair,
  And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
  Would grace a summer-queen.
And as I rode by Dalton-Hall
  Beneath the turrets high,
A Maiden on the castle-wall
  Was singing merrily:
'O Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
  And Greta woods are green;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there
  Than reign our English queen.'

'If, Maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,
To leave both tower and town,
Thou first must guess what life lead we
That dwell by dale and down.
And if thou canst that riddle read,
As read full well you may,
Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed
As blithe as Queen of May.'
Yet sung she, 'Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are green;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there
Than reign our English queen.

'I read you, by your bugle-horn
And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a ranger sworn
To keep the king's greenwood.'
'A Ranger, lady, winds his horn,
And 'tis at peep of light;
His blast is heard at merry morn,
And mine at dead of night.'
Yet sung she, 'Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are gay;
I would I were with Edmund there
To reign his Queen of May!

'With burnish'd brand and musketoon
So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold Dragoon
That lists the tuck of drum.'
'I list no more the tuck of drum,
No more the trumpet hear;
But when the beetle sounds his hum
My comrades take the spear.
And O! though Brignall banks be fair
And Greta woods be gay,

Yet mickle must the maiden dare
Would reign my Queen of May!

'Maiden! a nameless life I lead,
A nameless death I'll die;
The fiend whose lantern lights the mead
Were better mate than I!
And when I'm with my comrades met
Beneath the greenwood bough,—
What once we were we all forget,
Nor think what we are now.'

Chorus

'Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer-queen.'

Sir W. Scott.

MY LAST DUCHESS

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will 't please you sit and look at her? I said
"Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot

Of joy into the Duchess' cheek; perhaps
Frà Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat:" such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed: she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace—all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men,—good! but thanked
Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech—(which I have not)—to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
—E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive. Will 't please you rise? We'll meet
The company below, then. I repeat
The Count your master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretence

Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

R. Browning.

INCIDENT OF THE FRENCH CAMP

You know, we French stormed Ratisbon:
A mile or so away,
On a little mound, Napoleon
Stood on our storming-day;
With neck out-thrust, you fancy how,
Legs wide, arms locked behind,
As if to balance the prone brow
Oppressive with its mind.

Just as perhaps he mused, 'My plans
That soar, to earth may fall,
Let once my army-leader Lannes
Waver at yonder wall,'—
Out 'twixt the battery-smokes there flew
A rider, bound on bound
Full-galloping; nor bridle drew
Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung in smiling joy,
And held himself erect
By just his horse's mane, a boy:
You hardly could suspect—
(So tight he kept his lips compressed,
Scarce any blood came through,)
You looked twice e'er you saw his breast
Was all but shot in two.

'Well,' cried he, 'Emperor, by God's grace
We've got you Ratisbon!
The Marshal's in the market-place,
And you'll be there anon
To see your flag-bird flap his vans
Where I, to heart's desire,
Perched him!' The chief's eye flashed; his plans
Soared up again like fire.

The chief's eye flashed; but presently
Softened itself, as sheathes
A film the mother-eagle's eye
When her bruised eaglet breathes;
'You're wounded!' 'Nay,' his soldier's pride
Touched to the quick, he said:
'I'm killed, sire!' And his chief beside,
Smiling the boy fell dead.

R. Browning.

HOHENLINDEN

On Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow;
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight,
When the drum beat at dead of night
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast array'd
Each horseman drew his battle-blade,
And furious every charger neigh'd
To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills with thunder riven;
Then rush'd the steed, to battle driven;
And louder than the bolts of Heaven
Far flash'd the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stainéd snow;
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn; but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds rolling dun,
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun
Shout in their sulphurous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye Brave
Who rush to glory, or the grave!
Wave, Munich! all thy banners wave,
And charge with all thy chivalry!

Few, few shall part, where many meet;
The snow shall be their winding-sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

T. Campbell.

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE AT CORUNNA

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corpse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning;
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light
And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Not in sheet or in shroud we wound him;
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought, as we hollow'd his narrow bed
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his head,
And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him,—
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done
When the clock struck the hour for retiring:
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone,
But we left him alone with his glory.

C. Wolfe.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

HALF a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death,
  Rode the six hundred.
'Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!' he said:
Into the valley of Death
  Rode the six hundred.

'Forward, the Light Brigade!'
Was there a man dismayed?
Not though the soldier knew
  Some one had blundered:
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die;—
Into the valley of Death
  Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
  Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well;
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
  Rode the six hundred.

Flashed all their sabres bare,
Flashed as they turned in air,
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
  All the world wondered:

Plunged in the battery smoke,
Right through the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reeled from the sabre stroke
  Shattered and sundered.
Then they rode back, but not—
  Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
  Volleyed and thundered.
Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came through the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
  Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
  All the world wondered.
Honor the charge they made!
Honor the Light Brigade!
  Noble six hundred.

A. Tennyson.

BATTLE OF THE BALTIC

Of Nelson and the North
Sing the glorious day's renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone;

By each gun the lighted brand
In a bold determined hand,
And the Prince of all the land
Led them on.

Like leviathans afloat
Lay their bulwarks on the brine;
While the sign of battle flew
On the lofty British line:
It was ten of April morn by the chime:
As they drifted on their path
There was silence deep as death;
And the boldest held his breath
For a time.

But the might of England flush'd
To anticipate the scene;
And her van the fleeter rush'd
O'er the deadly space between.
'Hearts of oak!' our captains cried, when each gun
From its adamantine lips
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like the hurricane eclipse
Of the sun.

Again! again! again!
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feeble cheer the Dane
To our cheering sent us back;—
Their shots along the deep slowly boom:—
Then ceased—and all is wail,
As they strike the shatter'd sail;
Or in conflagration pale
Light the gloom.

Out spoke the victor then
As he hail'd them o'er the wave,

'Ye are brothers! ye are men!
And we conquer but to save:—
So peace instead of death let us bring:
But yield, proud foe, thy fleet
With the crews, at England's feet,
And make submission meet
To our King.'

Then Denmark bless'd our chief
That he gave her wounds repose;
And the sounds of joy and grief
From her people wildly rose,
As death withdrew his shades from the day:
While the sun look'd smiling bright
O'er a wide and woeful sight,
Where the fires of funeral light
Died away.

Now joy, old England, raise!
For the tidings of thy might,
By the festal cities' blaze,
Whilst the wine-cup shines in light;
And yet amidst that joy and uproar,
Let us think of them that sleep
Full many a fathom deep
By the wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore!

Brave hearts! to Britain's pride
Once so faithful and so true,
On the deck of fame that died,
With the gallant good Riou:
Soft sigh the winds of Heaven o'er their grave!
While the billow mournful rolls
And the mermaid's song condoles
Singing glory to the souls
Of the brave!

T. Campbell.

AFTER BLENHEIM

It was a summer evening,
Old Kaspar's work was done,
And he before his cottage door
Was sitting in the sun;
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round
Which he beside the rivulet
In playing there had found;
He came to ask what he had found
That was so large and smooth and round.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy
Who stood expectant by;
And then the old man shook his head,
And with a natural sigh
'"Tis some poor fellow's skull,' said he,
'Who fell in the great victory.

'I find them in the garden,
For there's many here about;
And often when I go to plough
The ploughshare turns them out.
For many thousand men,' said he,
'Were slain in that great victory.'

'Now tell us what 'twas all about,'
Young Peterkin he cries;
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes;
'Now tell us all about the war,
And what they fought each other for.'

'It was the English,' Kaspar cried,
'Who put the French to rout;
But what they fought each other for
I could not well make out.
But everybody said,' quoth he,
'That 'twas a famous victory.

'My father lived at Blenheim then,
Yon little stream hard by;
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,
And he was forced to fly:
So with his wife and child he fled,
Nor had he where to rest his head.

'With fire and sword the country round
Was wasted far and wide
And many a childing mother then
And newborn baby died:
But things like that, you know, must be
At every famous victory.

'They say it was a shocking sight
After the field was won;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun:
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.

'Great praise the Duke of Marlbro' won
And our good Prince Eugene;'
'Why 'twas a very wicked thing!'
Said little Wilhelmine;
'Nay . . nay . . my little girl,' quoth he,
'It was a famous victory.

'And everybody praised the Duke
Who this great fight did win.'
'But what good came of it at last?'
Quoth little Peterkin:—
'Why that I cannot tell,' said he,
'But 'twas a famous victory.'

R. Southey.

HERVÉ RIEL

I

On the sea and at the Hogue, sixteen hundred ninety-two,
Did the English fight the French,—woe to France!
And, the thirty-first of May, helter-skelter through the blue,
Like a crowd of frightened porpoises a shoal of sharks pursue,
Came crowding ship on ship to St. Malo on the Rance,
With the English fleet in view.

II

'Twas the squadron that escaped, with the victor in full chase;
First and foremost of the drove, in his great ship, Damfreville;
Close on him fled, great and small,
Twenty-two good ships in all;
And they signalled to the place
'Help the winners of a race!
Give us guidance, give us harbour, take us quick—or, quicker still,
Here's the English can and will!'

III

Then the pilots of the place put out brisk and leapt on board;
'Why, what hope or chance have ships like these to pass?' laughed they:
'Rocks to starboard, rocks to port, all the passage scarred and scored,
Shall the *Formidable* here with her twelve and eighty guns
Think to make the river-mouth by the single narrow way,
Trust to enter where 'tis ticklish for a craft of twenty tons,
And with flow at full beside?
Now, 'tis slackest ebb of tide.
Reach the mooring? Rather say,
While rock stands or water runs,
Not a ship will leave the bay!'

IV

Then was called a council straight.
Brief and bitter the debate:
'Here's the English at our heels; would you have them take in tow
All that's left us of the fleet, linked together stern and bow,
For a prize to Plymouth Sound?
Better run the ships aground!'
(Ended Damfreville his speech.)
'Not a minute more to wait!
Let the Captains all and each
Shove ashore, then blow up, burn the vessels on the beach!
France must undergo her fate.

V

'Give the word!' But no such word
Was ever spoke or heard;
For up stood, for out stepped, for in struck amid all these
—A Captain? A Lieutenant? A Mate—first, second, third?

No such man of mark, and meet
With his betters to compete!
But a simple Breton sailor pressed by Tourville for the fleet,
A poor coasting-pilot he, Hervé Riel the Croisickese.

VI

And, 'What mockery or malice have we here?' cries Hervé Riel:
'Are you mad, you Malouins? Are you cowards, fools, or rogues?
Talk to me of rocks and shoals, me who took the soundings, tell
On my fingers every bank, every shallow, every swell
'Twixt the offing here and Grève where the river disembogues?
Are you bought by English gold? Is it love the lying's for?
Morn and eve, night and day,
Have I piloted your bay,
Entered free and anchored fast at foot of Solidor.
Burn the fleet and ruin France? That were worse than fifty Hogues!
Sirs, they know I speak the truth! Sirs, believe me there's a way!
Only let me lead the line,
Have the biggest ship to steer,
Get this *Formidable* clear,
Make the others follow mine,
And I lead them, most and least, by a passage I know well,
Right to Solidor past Grève,
And there lay them safe and sound;
And if one ship misbehave,
—Keel so much as grate the ground,
Why, I've nothing but my life,—here's my head!' cries Hervé Riel.

VII

Not a minute more to wait.
'Steer us in, then, small and great!
Take the helm, lead the line, save the squadron!' cried its chief.
Captains, give the sailor place!
He is Admiral, in brief.
Still the north-wind, by God's grace!
See the noble fellow's face
As the big ship, with a bound,
Clears the entry like a hound,
Keeps the passage as its inch of way were the wide seas profound!
See, safe through shoal and rock,
How they follow in a flock,
Not a ship that misbehaves, not a keel that grates the ground,
Not a spar that comes to grief!
The peril, see, is past,
All are harboured to the last,
And just as Hervé Riel hollas 'Anchor!'—sure as fate
Up the English come—too late!

VIII

So, the storm subsides to calm:
They see the green trees wave
On the heights o'erlooking Grève.
Hearts that bled are stanched with balm.
'Just our rapture to enhance,
Let the English rake the bay,
Gnash their teeth and glare askance
As they cannonade away!
'Neath rampired Solidor pleasant riding on the Rance!'

How hope succeeds despair on each Captain's countenance!
Out burst all with one accord,
'This is Paradise for Hell!
Let France, let France's King
Thank the man that did the thing!'
What a shout, and all one word,
'Hervé Riel!'
As he stepped in front once more,
Not a symptom of surprise
In the frank blue Breton eyes,
Just the same man as before.

IX

Then said Damfreville, 'My friend,
I must speak out at the end,
Though I find the speaking hard.
Praise is deeper than the lips:
You have saved the King his ships,
You must name your own reward.
'Faith, our sun was near eclipse!
Demand whate'er you will,
France remains your debtor still.
Ask to heart's content and have! or my name's not Damfreville.'

X

Then a beam of fun out broke
On the bearded mouth that spoke,
As the honest heart laughed through
Those frank eyes of Breton blue:
'Since I needs must say my say,
Since on board the duty's done,
And from Malo Roads to Croisic Point, what is it but a run?—

Since 'tis ask and have, I may—
Since the others go ashore—
Come! A good whole holiday!
Leave to go and see my wife, whom I call the Belle Aurore!'
That he asked and that he got,—nothing more.

XI

Name and deed alike are lost:
Not a pillar nor a post
In his Croisic keeps alive the feat as it befell;
Not a head in white and black
On a single fishing smack,
In memory of the man but for whom had gone to wrack
All that France saved from the fight whence England bore the bell.
Go to Paris: rank on rank
Search the heroes flung pell-mell
On the Louvre, face and flank!
You shall look long enough ere you come to Hervé Riel.
So, for better and for worse,
Hervé Riel, accept my verse!
In my verse, Hervé Riel, do thou once more
Save the squadron, honour France, love thy wife the Belle Aurore!

R. Browning.

BARBARA FRIETCHIE *

Up from the meadows rich with corn,
Clear in the cool September morn,

The clustered spires of Frederick stand
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.

* By permission of Houghton Mifflin Company.

Round about them orchards sweep,
Apple and peach tree fruited deep,

Fair as a garden of the Lord,
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,

On that pleasant morn of the early fall
When Lee marched over the mountain wall,—

Over the mountains winding down,
Horse and foot, into Frederick town.

Forty flags with their silver stars,
Forty flags with their crimson bars,

Flapped in the morning wind: the sun
Of noon looked down, and saw not one.

Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten;

Bravest of all in Frederick town,
She took up the flag the men hauled down;

In her attic-window the staff she set,
To show that one heart was loyal yet.

Up the street came the rebel tread,
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.

Under his slouched hat left and right
He glanced; the old flag met his sight.

'Halt!'—the dust-brown ranks stood fast;
'Fire!'—out blazed the rifle-blast.

It shivered the window, pane and sash;
It rent the banner with seam and gash.

Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf;

She leaned far out on the window-sill,
And shook it forth with a royal will.

'Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,
But spare your country's flag,' she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,
Over the face of the leader came;

The nobler nature within him stirred
To life at that woman's deed and word:

'Who touches a hair of yon gray head
Dies like a dog! March on!' he said.

All day long through Frederick street
Sounded the tread of marching feet;

All day long that free flag tost
Over the heads of the rebel host.

Ever its torn folds rose and fell
On the loyal winds that loved it well;

And through the hill-gaps sunset light
Shone over it with a warm good-night.

Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,
And the Rebel rides on his raids no more.

Honor to her! and let a tear
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.

Over Barbara Frietchie's grave,
Flag of Freedom and Union wave!

Peace and order and beauty draw
Round thy symbol of light and law;

And ever the stars above look down
On thy stars below in Frederick town!

J. G. Whittier.

THE REVENGE

A Ballad of the Fleet

I

At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,
And a pinnace, like a flutter'd bird, came flying from far away:
'Spanish ships of war at sea! we have sighted fifty-three!'
Then sware Lord Thomas Howard: ''Fore God I am no coward;
But I cannot meet them here, for my ships are out of gear,
And the half my men are sick. I must fly, but follow quick.
We are six ships of the line; can we fight with fifty-three?'

II

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: 'I know you are no coward;
You fly them for a moment to fight with them again.
But I've ninety men and more that are lying sick ashore.
I should count myself the coward if I left them, my Lord Howard,
To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms of Spain.'

III

So Lord Howard past away with five ships of war that day,
Till he melted like a cloud in the silent summer heaven;
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men from the land
Very carefully and slow,
Men of Biddeford in Devon,
And we laid them on the ballast down below;
For we brought them all aboard,
And they blest him in their pain, that they were not left to Spain,
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the glory of the Lord.

IV

He had only a hundred seamen to work the ship and to fight,
And he sailed away from Flores till the Spaniard came in sight,
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the weather bow.
'Shall we fight or shall we fly?
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,
For to fight is but to die!
There'll be little of us left by the time this sun be set.'
And Sir Richard said again: 'We be all good English men.
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children of the devil,
For I never turn'd my back upon Don or devil yet.'

V

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and we roar'd a hurrah, and so
The little Revenge ran on sheer into the heart of the foe,
With her hundred fighters on deck, and her ninety sick below;
For half of their fleet to the right and half to the left were seen,
And the little Revenge ran on thro' the long sea-lane between.

VI

Thousands of their soldiers look'd down from their decks and laugh'd,
Thousands of their seamen made mock at the mad little craft
Running on and on, till delay'd
By their mountain-like San Philip that, of fifteen hundred tons,
And up-shadowing high above us with her yawning tiers of guns,
Took the breath from our sails, and we stay'd.

VII

And while now the great San Philip hung above us like a cloud
Whence the thunderbolt will fall
Long and loud,
Four galleons drew away
From the Spanish fleet that day,
And two upon the larboard and two upon the starboard lay,
And the battle-thunder broke from them all.

VIII

But anon the great San Philip, she bethought herself and went
Having that within her womb that had left her ill content;
And the rest they came aboard us, and they fought us hand to hand,
For a dozen times they came with their pikes and musqueteers,
And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog that shakes his ears
When he leaps from the water to the land.

IX

And the sun went down, and the stars came out far over the summer sea,
But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the fifty-three.
Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built galleons came,
Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle-thunder and flame;
Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with her dead and her shame.
For some were sunk and many were shatter'd, and so could fight us no more—
God of battles, was ever a battle like this in the world before?

X

For he said 'Fight on! fight on!'
Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck;
And it chanced that, when half of the short summer night was gone,
With a grisly wound to be drest he had left the deck,
But a bullet struck him that was dressing it suddenly dead,
And himself he was wounded again in the side and the head,
And he said 'Fight on! fight on!'

XI

And the night went down, and the sun smiled out far over the summer sea,
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay round us all in a ring;

But they dared not touch us again, for they feared that we still could sting,
So they watch'd what the end would be.
And we had not fought them in vain,
But in perilous plight were we,
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,
And half of the rest of us maim'd for life
In the crash of the cannonades and the desperate strife;
And the sick men down in the hold were most of them stark and cold,
And the pikes were all broken or bent, and the powder was all of it spent;
And the masts and the rigging were lying over the side;
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride,
'We have fought such a fight for a day and a night
As may never be fought again!
We have won great glory, my men!
And a day less or more
At sea or ashore,
We die—does it matter when?
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink her, split her in twain!
Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain!'

XII

And the gunner said 'Ay, ay,' but the seamen made reply:
'We have children, we have wives,
And the Lord hath spared our lives.
We will make the Spaniard promise, if we yield, to let us go;
We shall live to fight again and to strike another blow.'
And the lion there lay dying, and they yielded to the foe.

XIII

And the stately Spanish men to their flagship bore him then,
Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir Richard caught at last,
And they praised him to his face with their courtly foreign grace;
But he rose upon their decks, and he cried:
'I have fought for Queen and Faith like a valiant man and true;
I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do:
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville die!'
And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

XIV

And they stared at the dead that had been so valiant and true,
And had holden the power and glory of Spain so cheap
That he dared her with one little ship and his English few;
Was he devil or man? He was devil for aught they knew,
But they sank his body with honour down into the deep,
And they mann'd the Revenge with a swarthier alien crew,
And away she sail'd with her loss and long'd for her own;
When a wind from the lands they had ruin'd awoke from sleep,
And the water began to heave and the weather to moan,
And or ever that evening ended a great gale blew,
And a wave like the wave that is raised by an earthquake grew,
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and their masts and their flags,
And the whole sea plunged and fell on the shot-shatter'd navy of Spain,
And the little Revenge herself went down by the island crags
To be lost evermore the main.

A. Tennyson.

THE BATTLE OF NASEBY

(*By Obadiah Bind-their-kings-in-chains-and-their-nobles-with-links-of-iron, Sergeant in Ireton's Regiment.*)

Oh! wherefore come ye forth, in triumph from the North,
With your hands, and your feet, and your raiment all red?
And wherefore doth your rout send forth a joyous shout?
And whence be the grapes of the wine-press which ye tread?

Oh evil was the root, and bitter was the fruit,
And crimson was the juice of the vintage that we trod;
For we trampled on the throng of the haughty and the strong,
Who sate in the high places, and slew the saints of God.

It was about the noon of a glorious day of June,
That we saw their banners dance, and their cuirasses shine,
And the Man of Blood was there, with his long essenced hair,
And Astley, and Sir Marmaduke, and Rupert of the Rhine.

Like a servant of the Lord, with his Bible and his sword,
The General rode along us to form us to the fight,
When a murmuring sound broke out, and swelled into a shout
Among the godless horsemen upon the tyrant's right.

And hark! like the roar of the billows on the shore,
The cry of battle rises along their charging line!
For God! for the Cause! for the Church! for the Laws!
For Charles King of England, and Rupert of the Rhine!

The furious German comes, with his clarions and his drums,
His bravoes of Alsatia, and pages of Whitehall;

They are bursting on our flanks. Grasp your pikes, close your ranks;
For Rupert never comes but to conquer or to fall.

They are here! They rush on! We are broken! We are gone!
Our left is borne before them like stubble on the blast.
O Lord, put forth thy might! O Lord, defend the right!
Stand back to back, in God's name, and fight it to the last.

Stout Skippon hath a wound; the centre hath given ground:
Hark! hark!—What means the trampling of horsemen on our rear?
Whose banner do I see, boys? 'Tis he, thank God, 'tis he, boys.
Bear up another minute: brave Oliver is here.

Their heads all stooping low, their points all in a row,
Like a whirlwind on the trees, like a deluge on the dykes,
Our cuirassiers have burst on the ranks of the Accurst,
And at a shock have scattered the forest of his pikes.

Fast, fast, the gallants ride, in some safe nook to hide
Their coward heads, predestined to rot on Temple Bar:
And he—he turns, he flies:—shame on those cruel eyes
That bore to look on torture, and dare not look on war!

Ho! comrades, scour the plain; and, ere ye strip the slain,
First give another stab to make your search secure,
Then shake from sleeves and pockets their broad-pieces and lockets,
The tokens of the wanton, the plunder of the poor.

Fools! your doublets shone with gold, and your hearts were gay and bold,
When you kissed your lily hands to your lemans to-day;

And to-morrow shall the fox, from her chambers in the rocks,
Lead forth her tawny cubs to howl above the prey.

Where be your tongues that late mocked at heaven and hell and fate,
And the fingers that once were so busy with your blades,
Your perfumed satin clothes, your catches and your oaths,
Your stage-plays and your sonnets, your diamonds and your spades?

Down, down, for ever down with the mitre and the crown,
With the Belial of the Court, and the Mammon of the Pope!
There is woe in Oxford Halls: there is wail in Durham's Stalls:
The Jesuit smites his bosom: the Bishop rends his cope.

And She of the seven hills shall mourn her children's ills,
And tremble when she thinks on the edge of England's sword;
And the Kings of earth in fear shall shudder when they hear
What the hand of God hath wrought for the Houses and the Word.

T. B. Macaulay.

PHEIDIPPIDES

(Χαίρετε, νικῶμεν)

First I salute this soil of the blessed, river and rock!
Gods of my birthplace, dæmons and heroes, honor to all!
Then I name thee, claim thee for our patron, co-equal in praise
—Ay, with Zeus the Defender, with Her of the ægis and spear!

Also, ye of the bow and the buskin, praised be your peer,
Now, henceforth and forever,—O latest to whom I upraise
Hand and heart and voice! For Athens, leave pasture and flock!
Present to help, potent to save, Pan—patron I call!

Archons of Athens, topped by the tettix, see, I return!
See, 'tis myself here standing alive, no spectre that speaks!
Crowned with the myrtle, did you command me, Athens and you,
'Run, Pheidippides, run and race, reach Sparta for aid!
Persia has come, we are here, where is She?' Your command I obeyed,
Ran and raced: like stubble, some field which a fire runs through,
Was the space between city and city: two days, two nights did I burn
Over the hills, under the dales, down pits and up peaks.

Into their midst I broke: breath served but for 'Persia has come!
Persia bids Athens proffer slaves'-tribute, water and earth;
Razed to the ground is Eretria—but Athens, shall Athens sink,
Drop into dust and die—the flower of Hellas utterly die,
Die, with the wide world spitting at Sparta, the stupid, the stander-by?
Answer me quick, what help, what hand do you stretch o'er destruction's brink?
How,—when? No care for my limbs!—there's lightning in all and some—
Fresh and fit your message to bear, once lips give it birth!'

O my Athens—Sparta love thee? Did Sparta respond?
Every face of her leered in a furrow of envy, mistrust,

Malice,—each eye of her gave me its glitter of gratified hate!
Gravely they turned to take counsel, to cast for excuses. I stood
Quivering,—the limbs of me fretting as fire frets, an inch from dry wood:
'Persia has come, Athens asks aid, and still they debate?
Thunder, thou Zeus! Athene, are Spartans a quarry beyond
Swing of thy spear? Phoibos and Artemis, clang them "Ye must"!'

No bolt launched from Olumpos! Lo, their answer at last!
'Has Persia come,—does Athens ask aid,—may Sparta befriend?
Nowise precipitate judgment—too weighty the issue at stake!
Count we no time lost time which lags through respect to the gods!
Ponder that precept of old, "No warfare, whatever the odds
In your favor, so long as the moon, half-orbed, is unable to take
Full-circle her state in the sky!" Already she rounds to it fast:
Athens must wait, patient as we—who judgment suspend.'

Athens,—except for that sparkle,—thy name, I had mouldered to ash!
That sent a blaze through my blood; off, off and away was I back,
—Not one word to waste, one look to lose on the false and the vile!
Yet 'O Gods of my land!' I cried, as each hillock and plain,
Wood and stream, I knew, I named, rushing past them again,
'Have ye kept faith, proved mindful of honors we paid you erewhile?

Vain was the filleted victim, the fulsome libation! Too rash
Love in its choice, paid you so largely service so slack!

'Oak and olive and bay,—I bid you cease to enwreathe
Brows made bold by your leaf! Fade at the Persian's foot,
You that, our patrons were pledged, should never adorn a slave!
Rather I hail thee, Parnes,—trust to thy wild waste tract!
Treeless, herbless, lifeless mountain! What matter if slacked
My speed may hardly be, for homage to crag and to eave
No deity deigns to drape with verdure? at least I can breathe,
Fear in thee no fraud from the blind, no lie from the mute!'

Such my cry as, rapid, I ran over Parnes' ridge;
Gully and gap I clambered and cleared till, sudden, a bar
Jutted, a stoppage of stone against me, blocking the way.
Right! for I minded the hollow to traverse, the fissure across:
'Where I could enter, there I depart by! Night in the fosse?
Athens to aid? Though the dive were through Erebos, thus I obey—
Out of the day dive, into the day as bravely arise! No bridge
Better!'—when—ha! what was it I came on, of wonders that are?

There, in the cool of a cleft, sat he—majestical Pan!
Ivy drooped wanton, kissed his head, moss cushioned his hoof:
All the great god was good in the eyes grave-kindly—the curl
Carved on the bearded cheek, amused at a mortal's awe,

As, under the human trunk, the goat-thighs grand I saw.
'Halt, Pheidippides!'—halt I did, my brain of a whirl:
'Hither to me! Why pale in my presence?' he gracious began:
'How is it,—Athens, only in Hellas, holds me aloof?

'Athens, she only, rears me no fane, makes me no feast!
Wherefore? Than I what godship to Athens more helpful of old?
Ay, and still, and forever her friend! Test Pan, trust me!
Go, bid Athens take heart, laugh Persia to scorn, have faith
In the temples and tombs! Go, say to Athens, "The Goat-God saith:
When Persia—so much as strews not the soil—is cast in the sea,
Then praise Pan who fought in the ranks with your most and least,
Goat-thigh to greaved-thigh, made one cause with the free and the bold!"

'Say Pan saith: "Let this, foreshowing the place, be the pledge!"'
(Gay, the liberal hand held out this herbage I bear
—Fennel—I grasped it a-tremble with dew—whatever it bode)
'While, as for thee' . . . But enough! He was gone. If I ran hitherto—
Be sure that, the rest of my journey, I ran no longer, but flew.
Parnes to Athens—earth no more, the air was my road:
Here am I back. Praise Pan, we stand no more on the razor's edge!
Pan for Athens, Pan for me! I too have a guerdon rare!

Then spoke Miltiades. 'And thee, best runner of Greece,
Whose limbs did duty indeed,—what gift is promised thyself?

Tell it us straightway,—Athens the mother demands of her
son!'
Rosily blushed the youth: he paused: but, lifting at length
His eyes from the ground, it seemed as he gathered the rest
of his strength
Into the utterance—'Pan spoke thus: "For what thou hast
done
Count on a worthy reward! Henceforth be allowed thee
release
From the racer's toil, no vulgar reward in praise or in
pelf!"

'I am bold to believe, Pan means reward the most to my
mind!
Fight I shall, with our foremost, wherever this fennel may
grow,—
Pound—Pan helping us—Persia to dust, and, under the
deep,
Whelm her away forever; and then,—no Athens to save,—
Marry a certain maid, I know keeps faith to the brave,—
Hie to my house and home: and, when my children shall
creep
Close to my knees,—recount how the God was awful yet
kind,
Promised their sire reward to the full—rewarding him—
so!'

Unforeseeing one! Yes, he fought on the Marathon
day:
So, when Persia was dust, all cried 'To Akropolis!
Run, Pheidippides, one race more! the meed is thy due!
"Athens is saved, thank Pan," go shout!' He flung down
his shield,
Ran like fire once more: and the space 'twixt the Fennel-
field
And Athens was stubble again, a field which a fire runs
through,

Till in he broke: 'Rejoice, we conquer!' Like wine through clay,
Joy in his blood bursting his heart, he died—the bliss!

So, to this day, when friend meets friend, the word of salute
Is still 'Rejoice!' his word which brought rejoicing indeed.
So is Pheidippides happy forever,—the noble strong man
Who could race like a god, bear the face of a god, whom a god loved so well;
He saw the land saved he had helped to save, and was suffered to tell
Such tidings, yet never decline, but, gloriously as he began,
So to end gloriously—once to shout, thereafter be mute:
'Athens is saved!'—Pheidippides dies in the shout for his meed.

R. Browning.

LONGER NARRATIVE POEMS

THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

I

St. Agnes' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was!
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;
The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass,
And silent was the flock in woolly fold:
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
Like pious incense from a censer old,
Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death,
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith.

II

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man;
Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,
And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan,
Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:
The sculptur'd dead, on each side, seem to freeze,
Emprison'd in black, purgatorial rails:
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,
He passeth by; and his weak spirit fails
To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails.

III

Northward he turneth through a little door,
And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden tongue
Flatter'd to tears this aged man and poor;
But no—already had his deathbell rung;
The joys of all his life were said and sung;

His was harsh penance on St. Agnes' Eve:
Another way he went, and soon among
Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,
And all night kept awake, for sinner's sake to grieve.

IV

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude soft;
And so it chanc'd, for many a door was wide,
From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,
The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide:
The level chambers, ready with their pride,
Were glowing to receive a thousand guests:
The carvèd angels, ever eager-eyed,
Stared, where upon their heads the cornice rests,
With hair blown back, and wings put cross-wise on their breasts.

V

At length burst in the argent revelry,
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,
Numerous as shadows haunting fairily
The brain, new-stuff'd, in youth, with triumphs gay
Of old romance. These let us wish away,
And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady there,
Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry day,
On love, and wing'd St. Agnes' saintly care,
As she had heard old dames full many times declare.

VI

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,
Young virgins might have visions of delight,
And soft adorings from their loves receive
Upon the honey'd middle of the night,
If ceremonies due they did aright;
As, supperless to bed they must retire,
And couch supine their beauties, lily white;

Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require
Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they desire.

VII

Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline:
The music, yearning like a God in pain,
She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine,
Fix'd on the floor, saw many a sweeping train
Pass by—she heeded not at all: in vain
Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,
And back retir'd; not cool'd by high disdain,
But she saw not: her heart was otherwhere:
She sigh'd for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of the year.

VIII

She danc'd along with vague, regardless eyes,
Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and short:
The hallow'd hour was near at hand: she sighs
Amid the timbrels, and the throng'd resort
Of whisperers in anger, or in sport;
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and scorn,
Hoodwink'd with faery fancy; all amort,
Save to St. Agnes and her lambs unshorn,
And all the bliss to be before to-morrow morn.

IX

So, purposing each moment to retire,
She linger'd still. Meantime, across the moors,
Had come young Porphyro, with heart on fire
For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,
Buttress'd from moonlight, stands he, and implores
All saints to give him sight of Madeline,
But for one moment in the tedious hours,
That he might gaze and worship all unseen;
Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss—in sooth such things have been.

X

He ventures in: let no buzz'd whisper tell:
All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords
Will storm his heart, Love's fev'rous citadel:
For him, those chambers held barbarian hordes,
Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,
Whose very dogs would execrations howl
Against his lineage: not one breast affords
Him any mercy, in that mansion foul,
Save one old beldame, weak in body and in soul.

XI

Ah, happy chance! the agèd creature came,
Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,
To where he stood, hid from the torch's flame,
Behind a broad hall-pillar, far beyond
The sound of merriment and chorus bland:
He startled her; but soon she knew his face,
And grasp'd his fingers in her palsied hand,
Saying, "Mercy, Porphyro! hie thee from this place;
They are all here to-night, the whole blood-thirsty race!

XII

"Get hence! get hence! there's dwarfish Hildebrand;
He had a fever late, and in the fit
He cursèd thee and thine, both house and land:
Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not a whit
More tame for his gray hairs—Alas me! flit!
Flit like a ghost away."—"Ah, Gossip dear,
We're safe enough; here in this arm-chair sit,
And tell me how"—"Good Saints; not here, not here:
Follow me, child, or else these stones will be thy bier."

XIII

He follow'd through a lowly archèd way,
Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume;

And as she mutter'd "Well-a—well-a-day!"
He found him in a little moonlight room,
Pale, latticed, chill, and silent as a tomb.
"Now tell me where is Madeline," said he,
"O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom
Which none but secret sisterhood may see,
When they St. Agnes' wool are weaving piously."

XIV

"St. Agnes! Ah! it is St. Agnes' Eve—
Yet men will murder upon holy days;
Thou must hold water in a witch's sieve,
And be liege-lord of all the Elves and Fays,
To venture so: it fills me with amaze
To see thee, Porphyro!—St. Agnes' Eve!
God's help! my lady fair the conjuror plays
This very night: good angels her deceive!
But let me laugh awhile, I've mickle time to grieve."

XV

Feebly she laugheth in the languid moon,
While Porphyro upon her face doth look,
Like puzzled urchin on an agèd crone
Who keepeth closed a wond'rous riddle-book,
As spectacled she sits in chimney nook.
But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she told
His lady's purpose; and he scarce could brook
Tears, at the thought of those enchantments cold,
And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old.

XVI

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown rose,
Flushing his brow, and in his painèd heart
Made purple riot: then doth he propose
A stratagem that makes the beldame start:
"A cruel man and impious thou art:

Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep, and dream
Alone with her good angels, far apart
From wicked men like thee. Go, go!—I deem
Thou canst not surely be the same that thou didst seem."

XVII

"I will not harm her, by all saints I swear,"
Quoth Porphyro: "O may I ne'er find grace
When my weak voice shall whisper its last prayer,
If one of her soft ringlets I displace,
Or look with ruffian passion in her face:
Good Angela, believe me by these tears;
Or I will, even in a moment's space,
Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's ears,
And beard them, though they be more fang'd than wolves and bears."

XVIII

"Ah! why wilt thou affright a feeble soul?
A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, churchyard thing,
Whose passing-bell may ere the midnight toll;
Whose prayers for thee, each morn and evening,
Were never miss'd."—Thus plaining, doth she bring
A gentler speech from burning Porphyro;
So woful, and of such deep sorrowing,
That Angela gives promise she will do
Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or woe.

XIX

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,
Even to Madeline's chamber, and there hide
Him in a closet, of such privacy
That he might see her beauty unespied,
And win perhaps that night a peerless bride,
While legion'd fairies paced the coverlet,
And pale enchantment held her sleepy-eyed.

Never on such a night have lovers met,
Since Merlin paid his Demon all the monstrous debt.

XX

"It shall be as thou wishest," said the Dame:
"All cates and dainties shall be storèd there
Quickly on this feast-night: by the tambour frame
Her own lute thou wilt see: no time to spare,
For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare
On such a catering trust my dizzy head.
Wait here, my child, with patience; kneel in prayer
The while: Ah! thou must needs the lady wed,
Or may I never leave my grave among the dead."

XXI

So saying, she hobbled off with busy fear.
The lover's endless minutes slowly pass'd;
The dame return'd, and whisper'd in his ear
To follow her; with agèd eyes aghast
From fright of dim espial. Safe at last,
Through many a dusky gallery, they gain
The maiden's chamber, silken, hush'd, and chaste;
Where Porphyro took covert, pleas'd amain.
His poor guide hurried back with agues in her brain.

XXII

Her falt'ring hand upon the balustrade,
Old Angela was feeling for the stair,
When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmèd maid,
Rose, like a mission'd spirit, unaware:
With silver taper's light, and pious care,
She turn'd, and down the agèd gossip led
To a safe level matting. Now prepare,
Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed;
She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove fray'd and fled.

XXIII

Out went the taper as she hurried in;
Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:
She closed the door, she panted, all akin
To spirits of the air, and visions wide:
No utter'd syllable, or, woe betide!
But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
Paining with eloquence her balmy side;
As though a tongueless nightingale should swell
Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.

XXIV

A casement high and triple-arch'd there was,
All garlanded with carven imag'ries
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and kings.

XXV

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast.
As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for heaven:—Porphyro grew faint:
She knelt so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

XXVI

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,
Of all its wreathèd pearls her hair she frees,

Unclasps her warmèd jewels one by one,
Loosens her fragrant bodice; by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees:
Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,
In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

XXVII

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay,
Until the poppied warmth of sleep oppress'd
Her soothèd limbs, and soul fatigued away;
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day,
Blissfully haven'd both from joy and pain,
Clasp'd like a missal where swart Paynims pray,
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

XXVIII

Stol'n to this paradise, and so entranced,
Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress,
And listen'd to her breathing, if it chanced
To wake into a slumberous tenderness;
Which when he heard, that minute did he bless,
And breath'd himself: then from the closet crept,
Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,
And over the hush'd carpet, silent, stept,
And 'tween the curtains peep'd, where, lo!—how fast she slept.

XXIX

Then by the bed-side, where the faded moon
Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set
A table, and, half anguish'd, threw thereon
A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet:—

O for some drowsy Morphean amulet!
The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,
The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarionet,
Affray his ears, though but in dying tone:—
The hall door shuts again, and all the noise is gone.

XXX

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,
In blanchèd linen, smooth, and lavender'd,
While he from forth the closet brought a heap
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd,
With jellies soother than the creamy curd,
And lucent syrops, tinct with cinnamon,
Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd
From Fez, and spicèd dainties, every one,
From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Lebanon.

XXXI

These delicates he heap'd with glowing hand
On golden dishes and in baskets bright
Of wreathèd silver: sumptuous they stand
In the retired quiet of the night,
Filling the chilly room with perfume light.—
"And now, my love, my seraph fair, awake!
Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite:
Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes' sake,
Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth ache."

XXXII

Thus whispering, his warm, unnervèd arm
Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her dream
By the dusk curtains:—'twas a midnight charm
Impossible to melt as icèd stream:
The lustrous salvers in the moonlight gleam;
Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies:

It seem'd he never, never could redeem
From such a steadfast spell his lady's eyes;
So mus'd awhile, entoil'd in woofèd phantasies.

XXXIII

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute,—
Tumultuous,—and, in chords that tenderest be,
He play'd an ancient ditty, long since mute,
In Provence call'd "La belle dame sans mercy:"
Close to her ear touching the melody;—
Wherewith disturb'd, she utter'd a soft moan:
He ceased—she panted quick—and suddenly
Her blue affrayèd eyes wide open shone:
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-sculptured stone.

XXXIV

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,
Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep:
There was a painful change, that nigh expell'd
The blisses of her dream so pure and deep;
At which fair Madeline began to weep,
And moan forth witless words with many a sigh;
While still her gaze on Porphyro would keep;
Who knelt, with joinèd hands and piteous eye,
Fearing to move or speak, she look'd so dreamingly.

XXXV

"Ah, Porphyro!" said she, "but even now
Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,
Made tuneable with every sweetest vow;
And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear:
How changed thou art! how pallid, chill, and drear!
Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,
Those looks immortal, those complainings dear!
Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,
For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where to go."

XXXVI

Beyond a mortal man impassion'd far
At these voluptuous accents, he arose,
Ethereal, flush'd, and like a throbbing star
Seen mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose;
Into her dream he melted, as the rose
Blendeth its odour with the violet,—
Solution sweet: meantime the frost-wind blows
Like Love's alarum pattering the sharp sleet
Against the window-panes; St. Agnes' moon hath set.

XXXVII

'Tis dark: quick pattereth the flaw-blown sleet:
"This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!"
'Tis dark: the icèd gusts still rave and beat:
"No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!
Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine.—
Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring?
I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,
Though thou forsakest a deceivèd thing—
A dove forlorn and lost with sick unprunèd wing."

XXXVIII

"My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely bride!
Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest?
Thy beauty's shield, heart-shaped and vermeil dyed?
Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest
After so many hours of toil and quest,
A famish'd pilgrim,—saved by miracle.
Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest
Saving of thy sweet self; if thou think'st well
To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.

XXXIX

"Hark! 'tis an elfin storm from faery land,
Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed:

Arise—arise! the morning is at hand;—
The bloated wassailers will never heed:—
Let us away, my love, with happy speed;
There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,—
Drown'd all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead:
Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be,
For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee."

XL

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,
For there were sleeping dragons all around,
At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears;
Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found;
In all the house was heard no human sound.
A chain-droop'd lamp was flickering by each door;
The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,
Flutter'd in the besieging wind's uproar;
And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

XLI

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall;
Like phantoms to the iron porch they glide,
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,
With a huge empty flagon by his side:
The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,
But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:
By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide:—
The chains lie silent on the footworn stones;
The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

XLII

And they are gone: ay, ages long ago
These lovers fled away into the storm.
That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,
And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form
Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,

Were long be-nightmared. Angela the old
Died palsy-twitch'd, with meagre face deform;
The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,
For aye unsought-for slept among his ashes cold.

J. Keats.

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER

IN SEVEN PARTS

Part I

An ancient Mariner meeteth three Gallants bidden to a wedding-feast, and detaineth one.

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
"By thy long gray beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

"The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din."

He holds him with his skinny hand,
"There was a ship," quoth he.
"Hold off! unhand me, gray-beard loon!"
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

The Wedding-Guest is spell-bound by the eye of the old seafaring man, and constrained to hear his tale.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child:
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

"The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top.

The Mariner tells how the ship sailed southward with a good wind and fair weather, till it reached the line.

"The sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

"Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon—"
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The Wedding-Guest heareth the bridal music; but the Mariner continueth his tale.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

The ship driven by a storm toward the south pole.

"And now the Storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong:
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

"With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

"And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

The land of ice, and of fearful sounds where no living thing was to be seen.

"And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

"The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
Like noises in a swound!

Till a great sea-bird, called the Albatross, came through the snow-fog, and was received with great joy and hospitality.

"At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

"It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through!

And lo! the Albatross proveth a bird of good omen, and followeth the ship as it returned northward through fog and floating ice.

"And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo!

"In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmered the white moon-shine."

The ancient Mariner inhospitably killeth the pious bird of good omen.

"God save thee, ancient Mariner!
From the fiends, that plague thee thus!—
Why look'st thou so?"—"With my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross.

Part II

"The Sun now rose upon the right;
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

"And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariner's hollo!

His shipmates cry out against the ancient Mariner, for killing the bird of good luck.

"And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averred, I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
'Ah wretch!' said they, 'the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!'

But when the fog cleared off, they justify the same, and thus make themselves accomplices in the crime.

"Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist:
Then all averred, I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
''Twas right,' said they, 'such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.

The fair breeze continues; the ship enters the Pacific Ocean, and sails northward, even till it reaches the line

"The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

The ship hath been suddenly becalmed.

"Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

"All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

"Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

And the Albatross begins to be avenged.

"Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

"The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

"About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

A spirit had followed them; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and

"And some in dreams assurèd were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so;
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

"And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was withered at the root;

the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

"Ah! well-a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

Part III

The shipmates, in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner: in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.

"There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye,
When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

The ancient Mariner beholdeth a sign in the element afar off.

"At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

"A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it neared and neared:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged and tacked and veered.

At its nearer approach, it seemeth him to be a ship; and at a dear ransome he freeth his speech from the bonds of thirst.

"With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, 'A sail! a sail!'

"With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call:
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,

A flash of joy.

And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

And horror follows; for can it be a ship that comes onward without wind or tide?

"'See! see!' (I cried) 'she tacks no more!
Hither to work us weal;
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel!'

"The western wave was all a-flame,
The day was well-nigh done!
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Bewixt us and the Sun.

It seemeth him but the skeleton of a ship.

"And straight the Sun was flecked with bars,
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
With broad and burning face.

"'Alas!' (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
'How fast she nears and nears!
Are those her sails that glance in the sun,
Like restless gossameres?

And its ribs are seen as bars on the face of the setting Sun. The Spectre-Woman and her death-mate, and no other on board the skeleton ship. Like vessel, like crew!

"'Are those her ribs through which the sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that woman's mate?'

"Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Night-mare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

Death and Life-in-Death have diced for the ship's crew, and she (the latter) winneth the ancient Mariner.

"The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice;
'The game is done! I've won! I've won!'
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

No twilight within the courts of the Sun.

"The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out;
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

At the rising of the Moon,

"We listened and looked sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white
From the sails the dew did drip—
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The hornèd Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

one after another,

"One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

his shipmates drop down dead.

"Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

But Life-in-Death begins her work on the ancient Mariner.

"The souls did from their bodies fly,—
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it passed me by,
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!"

Part IV

The Wedding-Guest feareth that a spirit is talking to him;

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long, and lank. and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.

but the ancient Mariner assureth him of his bodily life, and proceedeth to relate his horrible penance.

"I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown."—
"Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!
This body dropt not down.

"Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

He despiseth the creatures of the calm,

"The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

and envieth that they should live, and so many lie dead.

"I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

"I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

"I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky,
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

But the curse liveth for him in the eye of the dead men.

"The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

"An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that
Is a curse in a dead man's eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

"The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide:
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—

"Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmèd water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

By the light of the Moon he beholdeth God's creatures of the great calm.

"Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

"Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

Their beauty and their happiness.

"O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:

He blesseth them in his heart.

A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware:
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

The spell begins to break.

"The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

Part V

"Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from heaven,
That slid into my soul.

By grace of the holy Mother, the ancient Mariner is refreshed with rain.

"The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
And when I awoke, it rained.

"My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

"I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
I was so light—almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessèd ghost.

He heareth sounds and seeth strange sights and commotions in the sky and the element.

"And soon I heard a roaring wind:
It did not come anear;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

"The upper air burst into life!
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To and fro they were hurried about!
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

"And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge;
And the rain poured down from one black cloud;
The Moon was at its edge.

"The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The Moon was at its side:
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

The bodies of the ship's crew are inspirited, and the ship moves on;

"The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on!
Beneath the lightning and the Moon
The dead men gave a groan.

"They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

"The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;
Yet never a breeze up blew;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
We were a ghastly crew.

"The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee:

The body and I pulled at one rope,
But he said nought to me.—"

but not by the souls of the men, nor by dæmons of earth or middle air, but by a blessed troop of angelic spirits, sent down by the invocation of the guardian saint.

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!"
"Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

"For when it dawned—they dropped their arms,
And clustered round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

"Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

"Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the sky-lark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

"And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

"It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

"Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

The lonesome Spirit from the south pole carries on the ship as far as the line, in obedience to the angelic troop, but still requireth vengeance.

"Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid; and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

"The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean;
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length,
With a short uneasy motion.

"Then, like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound:
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swound.

The Polar Spirit's fellow-dæmons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong; and two of them relate, one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

"How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard, and in my soul discerned,
Two voices in the air.

"'Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this the man?
By Him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless Albatross.'

"'The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,

He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.'

"The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.'

Part VI

First Voice

"'But tell me, tell me! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing—
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the ocean doing?'

Second Voice

"'Still as a slave before his lord,
The ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast—'

"'If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him.'

First Voice

The Mariner hath been cast into a trance; for the angelic power causeth the vessel to drive northward faster than human life could endure.

"'But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind?'

Second Voice

'The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

"'Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:

For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

The supernatural motion is retarded; the Mariner awakes, and his penance begins anew.

"I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the Moon was high;
The dead men stood together.

"All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

"The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

The curse is finally expiated.

"And now this spell was snapt: once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen—

"Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

"But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

"It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring—

It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

"Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

And the ancient Mariner beholdeth his native country.

"Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed
The lighthouse top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

"We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
'O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway.'

"The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon.

"The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

The angelic spirits leave the dead bodies,

and appear in their own forms of light.

"And the bay was white with silent light,
Till, rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

"A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were:

I turned my eyes upon the deck—
Oh Christ! what saw I there!

"Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

"This seraph-band, each waved his hand;
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

"This seraph-band, each waved his hand:
No voice did they impart—
No voice; but oh! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

"But soon I heard the dash of oars;
I heard the Pilot's cheer;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

"The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

"I saw a third—I heard his voice:
It is the Hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrive my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

Part VII

The Hermit of the wood

"This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with marineres
That come from a far countree.

"He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
He hath a cushion plump:
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

"The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,
'Why, this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights so many and fair,
That signal made but now?'

approacheth the ship with wonder.

"'Strange, by my faith!' the Hermit said—
'And they answered not our cheer!
The planks look warped! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

"'Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

"'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—'
(The Pilot made reply)
'I am a-feared'—'Push on, push on!
Said the Hermit cheerily.

"The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

The ship suddenly sinketh.

"Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

The ancient Mariner is saved in the Pilot's boat.

"Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat;
But, swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.

"Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

"I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

"I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
'Ha! ha!' quoth he, 'full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.'

"And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land!

The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

The ancient Mariner earnestly entreateth the Hermit to shrieve him; and the penance of life falls on him.

"'O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!'
The Hermit crossed his brow.
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say—
What manner of man art thou?'

"Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

And ever and anon throughout his future life an agony constraineth him to travel from land to land,

"Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns;
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

"I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach.

"What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding-guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are:
And hark the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer!

"O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemèd there to be.

"O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!—

"To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay!

and to teach, by his own example, love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth.

"Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

"He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.

S. T. Coleridge.

SOHRAB AND RUSTUM

AN EPISODE

And the first grey of morning fill'd the east,
And the fog rose out of the Oxus stream.
But all the Tartar camp along the stream
Was hush'd, and still the men were plunged in sleep;
Sohrab alone, he slept not; all night long
He had lain wakeful, tossing on his bed;
But when the grey dawn stole into his tent,
He rose, and clad himself, and girt his sword,
And took his horseman's cloak, and left his tent,
And went abroad into the cold wet fog,
Through the dim camp to Peran-Wisa's tent.

Through the black Tartar tents he passed, which stood
Clustering like bee-hives on the low flat strand
Of Oxus, where the summer-floods o'erflow
When the sun melts the snows in high Pamere;
Through the black tents he pass'd, o'er that low strand,
And to a hillock came, a little back
From the stream's brink—the spot where first a boat,
Crossing the stream in summer, scrapes the land.
The men of former times had crown'd the top
With a clay fort; but that was fall'n, and now
The Tartars built there Peran-Wisa's tent,
A dome of laths, and o'er it felts were spread.
And Sohrab came there, and went in, and stood
Upon the thick piled carpets in the tent,
And found the old man sleeping on his bed
Of rugs and felts, and near him lay his arms.
And Peran-Wisa heard him, though the step
Was dull'd; for he slept light, an old man's sleep;
And he rose quickly on one arm, and said:—

'Who art thou? for it is not yet clear dawn.
Speak! is there news, or any night alarm?'

But Sohrab came to the bedside, and said:—
'Thou know'st me, Peran-Wisa! it is I.
The sun is not yet risen, and the foe
Sleep; but I sleep not; all night long I lie
Tossing and wakeful, and I come to thee.
For so did King Afrasiab bid me seek
Thy counsel, and to heed thee as thy son,
In Samarcand, before the army march'd;
And I will tell thee what my heart desires.
Thou know'st if, since from Ader-baijan first
I came among the Tartars and bore arms,
I have still served Afrasiab well, and shown,
At my boy's years, the courage of a man.
This too thou know'st, that while I still bear on
The conquering Tartar ensigns through the world,
And beat the Persians back on every field,
I seek one man, one man, and one alone—
Rustum, my father; who I hoped should greet,
Should one day greet, upon some well-fought field
His not unworthy, not inglorious son.
So I long hoped, but him I never find.
Come then, hear now, and grant me what I ask.
Let the two armies rest to-day; but I
Will challenge forth the bravest Persian lords
To meet me, man to man? if I prevail,
Rustum will surely hear it; if I fall—
Old man, the dead need no one, claim no kin.
Dim is the rumour of a common fight,
Where host meets host, and many names are sunk;
But of a single combat fame speaks clear.'

He spoke; and Peran-Wisa took the hand
Of the young man in his, and sigh'd, and said:—

'O Sohrab, an unquiet heart is thine!
Canst thou not rest among the Tartar chiefs,
And share the battle's common chance with us
Who love thee, but must press for ever first,

In single fight incurring single risk,
To find a father thou hast never seen?
That were far best, my son, to stay with us
Unmurmuring; in our tents, while it is war,
And when 'tis truce, then in Afrasiab's towns.
But, if this one desire indeed rules all,
To seek out Rustum—seek him not through fight!
Seek him in peace, and carry to his arms,
O Sohrab, carry an unwounded son!
But far hence seek him, for he is not here.
For now it is not as when I was young,
When Rustum was in front of every fray;
But now he keeps apart, and sits at home,
In Seistan, with Zal, his father old.
Whether that his own mighty strength at last
Feels the abhorr'd approaches of old age,
Or in some quarrel with the Persian King.
There go!—Thou wilt not? Yet my heart forebodes
Danger or death awaits thee on this field.
Fain would I know thee safe and well, though lost
To us; fain therefore send thee hence, in peace
To seek thy father, not seek single fights
In vain;—but who can keep the lion's cub
From ravening, and who govern Rustum's son?
Go, I will grant thee what thy heart desires.'
So said he, and dropp'd Sohrab's hand, and left
His bed, and the warm rugs whereon he lay;
And o'er his chilly limbs his woollen coat
He pass'd, and tied his sandals on his feet,
And threw a white cloak round him, and he took
In his right hand a ruler's staff, no sword;
And on his head he set his sheep-skin cap,
Black, glossy, curl'd, the fleece of Kara-Kul;
And rais'd the curtain of his tent, and call'd
His herald to his side, and went abroad.
The sun by this had risen, and clear'd the fog

From the broad Oxus and the glittering sands.
And from their tents the Tartar horsemen filed
Into the open plain; so Haman bade—
Haman, who next to Peran-Wisa ruled
The host, and still was in his lusty prime.
From their black tents, long files of horse, they stream'd;
As when some grey November morn the files,
In marching order spread, of long-necked cranes
Stream over Casbin and the southern slopes
Of Elburz, from the Aralian estuaries,
Or some frore Caspian reed-bed, southward bound
For the warm Persian sea-board—so they stream'd.
The Tartars of the Oxus, the King's guard,
First, with black sheep-skin caps and with long spears;
Large men, large steeds; who from Bokhara come
And Khiva, and ferment the milk of mares.
Next, the more temperate Toorkmuns of the south,
The Tukas, and the lances of Salore,
And those from Attruck and the Caspian sands;
Light men and on light steeds, who only drink
The acrid milk of camels, and their wells.
And then a swarm of wandering horse, who came
From far, and a more doubtful service own'd;
The Tartars of Ferghana, from the banks
Of the Jaxartes, men with scanty beards
And close-set skull-caps; and those wilder hordes
Who roam o'er Kipchak and the northern waste,
Kalmucks and unkempt Kuzzacks, tribes who stray
Nearest the Pole, and wandering Kirghizzes,
Who come on shaggy ponies from Pamere;
These all filed out from camp into the plain.
And on the other side the Persians form'd;—
First a light cloud of horse, Tartars they seem'd,
The Ilyats of Khorassan; and behind,
The royal troops of Persia, horse and foot,
Marshall'd battalions bright in burnish'd steel.

But Peran-Wisa with his herald came,
Threading the Tartar squadrons to the front,
And with his staff kept back the foremost ranks.
And when Ferood, who led the Persians, saw
That Peran-Wisa kept the Tartars back,
He took his spear, and to the front he came,
And check'd his ranks, and fix'd them where they stood.
And the old Tartar came upon the sand
Betwixt the silent hosts, and spake, and said:—
'Ferood, and ye, Persians and Tartars, hear!
Let there be truce between the hosts to-day.
But choose a champion from the Persian lords
To fight our champion Sohrab, man to man.'
As, in the country, on a morn in June,
When the dew glistens on the pearled ears,
A shiver runs through the deep corn for joy—
So, when they heard what Peran-Wisa said,
A thrill through all the Tartar squadrons ran
Of pride and hope for Sohrab, whom they loved.
But as a troop of pedlars, from Cabool,
Cross underneath the Indian Caucasus,
That vast sky-neighboring mountain of milk snow;
Crossing so high, that, as they mount, they pass
Long flocks of travelling birds dead on the snow,
Choked by the air, and scarce can they themselves
Slake their parch'd throats with sugar'd mulberries—
In single file they move, and stop their breaths,
For fear they should dislodge the o'erhanging snows—
So the pale Persians held their breath with fear.
And to Ferood his brother chiefs came up
To counsel; Gudurz and Zoarrah came,
And Feraburz, who ruled the Persian host
Second, and was the uncle of the King;
These came and counsell'd, and then Gudurz said:—
'Ferood, shame bids us take their challenge up,
Yet champion have we none to match this youth.

He has the wild stag's foot, the lion's heart.
But Rustum came last night; aloof he sits
And sullen, and has pitched his tents apart.
Him will I seek, and carry to his ear
The Tartar challenge, and this young man's name;
Haply he will forget his wrath, and fight.
Stand forth the while, and take their challenge up.'
So spake he; and Ferood stood forth and cried:—
'Old man, be it agreed as thou hast said!
Let Sohrab arm, and we will find a man.'
He spake; and Peran-Wisa turn'd, and strode
Back through the opening squadrons to his tent.
But through the anxious Persians Gudurz ran,
And cross'd the camp which lay behind, and reach'd,
Out on the sands beyond it, Rustum's tents.
Of scarlet cloth they were, and glittering gay,
Just pitch'd; the high pavilion in the midst
Was Rustum's, and his men lay camp'd around.
And Gudurz enter'd Rustum's tent, and found
Rustum; his morning meal was done, but still
The table stood before him, charged with food—
A side of roasted sheep, and cakes of bread,
And dark green melons; and there Rustum sate
Listless, and held a falcon on his wrist,
And play'd with it; but Gudurz came and stood
Before him; and he look'd, and saw him stand,
And with a cry sprang up and dropp'd the bird,
And greeted Gudurz with both hands, and said:—
'Welcome! these eyes could see no better sight.
What news? but sit down first, and eat and drink.'
But Gudurz stood in the tent-door, and said:—
'Not now! a time will come to eat and drink,
But not to-day; to-day has other needs.
The armies are drawn out, and stand at gaze;
For from the Tartars is a challenge brought
To pick a champion from the Persian lords

To fight their champion—and thou know'st his name—
Sohrab men call him, but his birth is hid.
O Rustum, like thy might is this young man's!
He has the wild stag's foot, the lion's heart;
And he is young, and Iran's chiefs are old,
Or else too weak; and all eyes turn to thee.
Come down and help us, Rustum, or we lose!'

He spoke; but Rustum answer'd with a smile:—
'Go to! if Iran's chiefs are old, then I
Am older; if the young are weak, the King
Errs strangely; for the King, for Kai Khosroo,
Himself is young, and honors younger men,
And lets the aged moulder to their graves.
Rustum he loves no more, but loves the young—
The young may rise at Sohrab's vaunts, not I.
For what care I, though all speak Sohrab's fame?
For would that I myself had such a son,
And not that one slight helpless girl I have—
A son so famed, so brave, to send to war,
And I to tarry with the snow-hair'd Zal,
My father, whom the robber Afghans vex,
And clip his borders short, and drive his herds,
And he has none to guard his weak old age.
There would I go, and hang my armour up,
And with my great name fence that weak old man,
And spend the goodly treasures I have got,
And rest my age, and hear of Sohrab's fame,
And leave to death the hosts of thankless kings,
And with these slaughterous hands draw sword no more.'

He spoke, and smiled; and Gudurz made reply:—
'What then, O Rustum, will men say to this,
When Sohrab dares our bravest forth, and seeks
Thee most of all, and thou, whom most he seeks,
Hidest thy face? Take heed lest men should say:
Like some old miser, Rustum hoards his fame,
And shuns to peril it with younger men.'

And, greatly moved, then Rustum made reply:—
'O Gudurz, wherefore dost thou say such words?
Thou knowest better words than this to say.
What is one more, one less, obscure or famed,
Valiant or craven, young or old, to me?
Are not they mortal, am not I myself?
But who for men of nought would do great deeds?
Come, thou shalt see how Rustum hoards his fame!
But I will fight unknown, and in plain arms;
Let not men say of Rustum, he was match'd
In single fight with any mortal man.'
He spoke, and frown'd; and Gudurz turn'd, and ran
Back quickly through the camp in fear and joy—
Fear at his wrath, but joy that Rustum came.
But Rustum strode to his tent-door, and call'd
His followers in, and bade them bring his arms,
And clad himself in steel; the arms he chose
Were plain, and on his shield was no device,
Only his helm was rich, inlaid with gold,
And, from the fluted spine atop, a plume
Of horsehair waved, a scarlet horsehair plume.
So arm'd, he issued forth; and Ruksh, his horse,
Followed him like a faithful hound at heel—
Ruksh, whose renown was noised through all the earth,
The horse, whom Rustum on a foray once
Did in Bokhara by the river find
A colt beneath its dam, and drove him home,
And rear'd him; a bright bay, with lofty crest,
Dight with a saddle-cloth of broider'd green
Crusted with gold, and on the ground were work'd
All beasts of chase, all beasts which hunters know.
So follow'd, Rustum left his tents, and cross'd
The camp, and to the Persian host appear'd.
And all the Persians knew him, and with shouts
Hail'd; but the Tartars knew not who he was.
And dear as the wet diver to the eyes

Of his pale wife who waits and weeps on shore,
By sandy Bahrein, in the Persian Gulf,
Plunging all day in the blue waves, at night,
Having made up his tale of precious pearls,
Rejoins her in their hut upon the sands—
So dear to the pale Persians Rustum came.

And Rustum to the Persian front advanced,
And Sohrab arm'd in Haman's tent, and came.
And as afield the reapers cut a swath
Down through the middle of a rich man's corn,
And on each side are squares of standing corn,
And in the midst a stubble, short and bare—
So on each side were squares of men, with spears
Bristling, and in the midst, the open sand.
And Rustum came upon the sand, and cast
His eyes toward the Tartar tents, and saw
Sohrab come forth, and eyed him as he came.

As some rich woman, on a winter's morn,
Eyes through her silken curtains the poor drudge
Who with numb blacken'd fingers makes her fire—
At cock-crow, on a starlit winter's morn,
When the frost flowers the whiten'd window-panes—
And wonders how she lives, and what the thoughts
Of that poor drudge may be; so Rustum eyed
The unknown adventurous youth, who from afar
Came seeking Rustum, and defying forth
All the most valiant chiefs; long he perused
His spirited air, and wonder'd who he was.
For very young he seem'd, tenderly rear'd;
Like some young cypress, tall, and dark, and straight,
Which in a queen's secluded garden throws
Its slight dark shadow on the moonlit turf,
By midnight, to a bubbling fountain's sound—
So slender Sohrab seem'd, so softly rear'd.
And a deep pity enter'd Rustum's soul
As he beheld him coming; and he stood,

And beckon'd to him with his hand, and said:—
'O thou young man, the air of Heaven is soft,
And warm, and pleasant; but the grave is cold!
Heaven's air is better than the cold dead grave.
Behold me! I am vast, and clad in iron,
And tried; and I have stood on many a field
Of blood, and I have fought with many a foe—
Never was that field lost, or that foe saved.
O Sohrab, wherefore wilt thou rush on death?
Be govern'd! quit the Tartar host, and come
To Iran, and be as my son to me,
And fight beneath my banner till I die!
There are no youths in Iran brave as thou.'
So he spake, mildly; Sohrab heard his voice,
The mighty voice of Rustum, and he saw
His giant figure planted on the sand,
Sole, like some single tower, which a chief
Hath builded on the waste in former years
Against the robbers; and he saw that head,
Streak'd with its first grey hairs;—hope filled his soul,
And he ran forward and embraced his knees,
And clasp'd his hand within his own, and said:—
'O, by thy father's head; by thine own soul!
Art thou not Rustum? speak! art thou not he?'
But Rustum eyed askance the kneeling youth,
And turn'd away, and spake to his own soul:—
'Ah me, I muse what this young fox may mean!
False, wily, boastful, are these Tartar boys.
For if I now confess this thing he asks,
And hide it not, but say: *Rustum is here!*
He will not yield indeed, nor quit our foes,
But he will find some pretext not to fight,
And praise my fame, and proffer courteous gifts,
A belt or sword perhaps, and go his way.
And on a feast-tide, in Afrasiab's hall,
In Samarcand, he will arise and cry:

"I challenged once, when the two armies camp'd
Beside the Oxus, all the Persian lords
To cope with me in single fight; but they
Shrank, only Rustum dared; then he and I
Changed gifts, and went on equal terms away."
So will he speak, perhaps, while men applaud;
Then were the chiefs of Iran shamed through me.'

And then he turn'd, and sternly spake aloud:—
'Rise! wherefore dost thou vainly question thus
Of Rustum? I am here, whom thou hast call'd
By challenge forth; make good thy vaunt, or yield!
Is it with Rustum only thou wouldst fight?
Rash boy, men look on Rustum's face and flee!
For well I know, that did great Rustum stand
Before thy face this day, and were reveal'd,
There would be then no talk of fighting more.
But being what I am, I tell thee this—
Do thou record it in thine inmost soul:
Either thou shalt renounce thy vaunt and yield,
Or else thy bones shall strew this sand, till winds
Bleach them, or Oxus with his summer-floods,
Oxus in summer wash them all away.'

He spoke; and Sohrab answer'd, on his feet:—
'Art thou so fierce? Thou wilt not fright me so!
I am no girl, to be made pale by words.
Yet this thou hast said well, did Rustum stand
Here on this field, there were no fighting then.
But Rustum is far hence, and we stand here.
Begin! thou art more vast, more dread than I,
And thou art proved, I know, and I am young—
But yet success sways with the breath of Heaven.
And though thou thinkest that thou knowest sure
Thy victory, yet thou canst not surely know.
For we are all, like swimmers in the sea,
Poised on the top of a huge wave of fate,
Which hangs uncertain to which side to fall.

And whether it will heave us up to land,
Or whether it will roll us out to sea,
Back out to sea, to the deep waves of death,
We know not, and no search will make us know:
Only the event will teach us in its hour.'

He spoke, and Rustum answered not, but hurl'd
His spear; down from the shoulder, down it came,
As on some partridge in the corn a hawk,
That long has tower'd in the airy clouds,
Drops like a plummet; Sohrab saw it come,
And sprang aside, quick as a flash; the spear
Hiss'd, and went quivering down into the sand,
Which it sent flying wide;—then Sohrab threw
In turn, and full struck Rustum's shield; sharp rang,
The iron plates rang sharp, but turn'd the spear.
And Rustum seized his club, which none but he
Could wield; an unlopp'd trunk it was, and huge,
Still rough—like those which men in treeless plains
To build them boats fish from the flooded rivers,
Hyphasis or Hydaspes, when, high up
By their dark springs, the wind in winter-time
Hath made in Himalayan forests wrack,
And strewn the channels with torn boughs—so huge
The club which Rustum lifted now, and struck
One stroke; but again Sohrab sprang aside,
Lithe as the glancing snake, and the club came
Thundering to earth, and leapt from Rustum's hand.
And Rustum follow'd his own blow, and fell
To his knees, and with his fingers clutched the sand;
And now might Sohrab have unsheathed his sword,
And pierced the mighty Rustum while he lay
Dizzy, and on his knees, and choked with sand;
But he look'd on, and smiled, nor bared his sword,
But courteously drew back, and spoke, and said:—

'Thou strik'st too hard! that club of thine will float
Upon the summer floods, and not my bones.

But rise, and be not wroth! not wroth am I;
No, when I see thee, wrath forsakes my soul.
Thou say'st, thou art not Rustum; be it so!
Who art thou then, that canst so touch my soul?
Boy as I am, I have seen battles too—
Have waded foremost in their bloody waves,
And heard their hollow roar of dying men;
But never was my heart thus touch'd before.
Are they from Heaven, these softenings of the heart?
O thou old warrior, let us yield to Heaven!
Come, plant we here in earth our angry spears,
And make a truce, and sit upon this sand,
And pledge each other in red wine, like friends,
And thou shalt talk to me of Rustum's deeds.
There are enough foes in the Persian host,
Whom I may meet, and strike, and feel no pang;
Champions enough Afrasiab has, whom thou
May'st fight; fight *them,* when they confront thy spear:
But oh, let there be peace 'twixt thee and me!'

He ceased, but while he spake, Rustum had risen,
And stood erect, trembling with rage; his club
He left to lie, but had regain'd his spear,
Whose fiery point now in his mail'd right-hand
Blazed bright and baleful, like that autumn-star,
The baleful sign of fevers; dust had soil'd
His stately crest, and dimm'd his glittering arms.
His breast heaved, his lips foam'd, and twice his voice
Was choked with rage; at last these words broke way:—

'Girl! nimble with thy feet, not with thy hands!
Curl'd minion, dancer, coiner of sweet words!
Fight, let me hear thy hateful voice no more!
Thou art not in Afrasiab's gardens now
With Tartar girls, with whom thou art wont to dance;
But on the Oxus-sands, and in the dance
Of battle, and with me, who make no play
Of war; I fight it out, and hand to hand.

Speak not to me of truce, and pledge, and wine!
Remember all thy valour; try thy feints
And cunning! all the pity I had is gone;
Because thou hast shamed me before both the hosts
With thy light skipping tricks, and thy girl's wiles.'
He spoke, and Sohrab kindled at his taunts,
And he too drew his sword; at once they rush'd
Together, as two eagles on one prey
Come rushing down together from the clouds,
One from the east, one from the west; their shields
Dash'd with a clang together, and a din
Rose, such as that the sinewy woodcutters
Make often in the forest's heart at morn,
Of hewing axes, crashing trees—such blows
Rustum and Sohrab on each other hail'd.
And you would say that sun and stars took part
In that unnatural conflict; for a cloud
Grew suddenly in Heaven, and dark'd the sun
Over the fighters' heads; and a wind rose
Under their feet, and moaning swept the plain,
And in a sandy whirlwind wrapp'd the pair.
In gloom they twain were wrapp'd, and they alone;
For both the on-looking hosts on either hand
Stood in broad daylight, and the sky was pure,
And the sun sparkled on the Oxus stream.
But in the gloom they fought, with bloodshot eyes
And labouring breath; first Rustum struck the shield
Which Sohrab held stiff out; the steel-spiked spear
Rent the tough plates, but fail'd to reach the skin,
And Rustum pluck'd it back with angry groan.
Then Sohrab with his sword smote Rustum's helm,
Nor clove its steel quite through; but all the crest
He shore away, and that proud horsehair plume,
Never till now defiled, sank to the dust;
And Rustum bow'd his head; but then the gloom
Grew blacker, thunder rumbled in the air,

And lightnings rent the cloud; and Ruksh, the horse,
Who stood at hand, utter'd a dreadful cry;—
No horse's cry was that, most like the roar
Of some pain'd desert-lion, who all day
Hath trail'd the hunter's javelin in his side,
And comes at night to die upon the sand.
The two hosts heard that cry, and quaked for fear,
And Oxus curdled as it cross'd his stream.
But Sohrab heard, and quail'd not, but rush'd on,
And struck again; and again Rustum bow'd
His head; but this time all the blade, like glass,
Sprang in a thousand shivers on the helm,
And in the hand the hilt remain'd alone.
Then Rustum raised his head; his dreadful eyes
Glared, and he shook on high his menacing spear,
And shouted: *Rustum!*—Sohrab heard that shout,
And shrank amazed; back he recoil'd one step,
And scanned with blinking eyes the advancing form;
And then he stood bewilder'd; and he dropp'd
His covering shield, and the spear pierced his side.
He reel'd, and staggering back, sank to the ground;
And then the gloom dispersed, and the wind fell,
And the bright sun broke forth, and melted all
The cloud; and the two armies saw the pair—
Saw Rustum standing, safe upon his feet,
And Sohrab, wounded, on the bloody sand.

Then, with a bitter smile, Rustum began:—
'Sohrab, thou thoughtest in thy mind to kill
A Persian lord this day, and strip his corpse,
And bear thy trophies to Afrasiab's tent.
Or else that the great Rustum would come down
Himself to fight, and that thy wiles would move
His heart to take a gift, and let thee go.
And then that all the Tartar host would praise
Thy courage or thy craft, and spread thy fame,
To glad thy father in his weak old age.

Fool, thou art slain, and by an unknown man!
Dearer to the red jackals shalt thou be
Than to thy friends, and to thy father old.'
And, with a fearless mien, Sohrab replied:—
'Unknown thou art; yet thy fierce vaunt is vain.
Thou dost not slay me, proud and boastful man!
No! Rustum slays me, and this filial heart.
For were I match'd with ten such men as thee,
And I were that which till to-day I was,
They should be lying here, I standing there.
But that beloved name unnerved my arm—
That name, and something, I confess, in thee,
Which troubles all my heart, and made my shield
Fall; and thy spear transfix'd an unarm'd foe.
And now thou boastest, and insult'st my fate.
But hear thou this, fierce man, tremble to hear;
The mighty Rustum shall avenge my death!
My father, whom I seek through all the world,
He shall avenge my death, and punish thee!'
As when some hunter in the spring hath found
A breeding eagle sitting on her nest,
Upon the craggy isle of a hill-lake,
And pierced her with an arrow as she rose,
And follow'd her to find her where she fell
Far off;—anon her mate comes winging back
From hunting, and a great way off descries
His huddling young left sole; at that, he checks
His pinion, and with short uneasy sweeps
Circles above his eyry, with loud screams
Chiding his mate back to her nest; but she
Lies dying, with the arrow in her side,
In some far stony gorge out of his ken,
A heap of fluttering feathers—never more
Shall the lake glass her, flying over it;
Never the black and dripping precipices
Echo her stormy scream as she sails by—

As that poor bird flies home, nor knows his loss,
So Rustum knew not his own loss, but stood
Over his dying son, and knew him not.
But, with a cold incredulous voice, he said:—
'What prate is this of fathers and revenge?
The mighty Rustum never had a son.'
And, with a failing voice, Sohrab replied:—
'Ah yes, he had! and that lost son am I.
Surely the news will one day reach his ear,
Reach Rustum, where he sits, and tarries long,
Somewhere, I know not where, but far from here;
And pierce him like a stab, and make him leap
To arms, and cry for vengeance upon thee.
Fierce man, bethink thee, for an only son!
What will that grief, what will that vengeance be?
Oh, could I live, till I that grief have seen!
Yet him I pity not so much, but her,
My mother, who in Ader-baijan dwells
With that old king, her father, who grows grey
With age, and rules over the valiant Koords.
Her most I pity, who no more will see
Sohrab returning from the Tartar camp,
With spoils and honour, when the war is done.
But a dark rumour will be bruited up,
From tribe to tribe, until it reach her ear;
And then will that defenceless woman learn
That Sohrab will rejoice her sight no more,
But that in battle with a nameless foe,
By the far-distant Oxus, he is slain.'
He spoke; and as he ceased, he wept aloud,
Thinking of her he left, and his own death.
He spoke; but Rustum listen'd, plunged in thought.
Nor did he yet believe it was his son
Who spoke, although he call'd back names he knew;
For he had had sure tidings that the babe,
Which was in Ader-baijan born to him,

Had been a puny girl, no boy at all—
So that sad mother sent him word, for fear
Rustum should seek the boy, to train in arms.
And so he deem'd that either Sohrab took,
By a false boast, the style of Rustum's son;
Or that men gave it him, to swell his fame.
So deem'd he; yet he listen'd, plunged in thought;
And his soul set to grief, as the vast tide
Of the bright rocking Ocean sets to shore
At the full moon; tears gather'd in his eyes;
For he remember'd his own early youth,
And all its bounding rapture; as, at dawn,
The shepherd from his mountain-lodge descries
A far, bright city, smitten by the sun,
Through many rolling clouds—so Rustum saw
His youth; saw Sohrab's mother, in her bloom;
And that old king, her father, who loved well
His wandering guest, and gave him his fair child
With joy; and all the pleasant life they led,
They three, in that long-distant summer-time—
The castle, and the dewy woods, and hunt
And hound, and morn on those delightful hills
In Ader-baijan. And he saw that Youth,
Of age and looks to be his own dear son,
Piteous and lovely, lying on the sand,
Like some rich hyacinth which by the scythe
Of an unskilful gardener has been cut,
Mowing the garden grass-plots near its bed,
And lies, a fragrant tower of purple bloom,
On the mown, dying grass—so Sohrab lay,
Lovely in death, upon the common sand.
And Rustum gazed on him with grief, and said:—
'O Sohrab, thou indeed art such a son
Whom Rustum, wert thou his, might well have loved.
Yet here thou errest, Sohrab, or else men
Have told thee false—thou art not Rustum's son.

For Rustum had no son; one child he had—
But one—a girl; who, with her mother now
Plies some light female task, nor dreams of us—
Of us she dreams not, nor of wounds, nor war.'
But Sohrab answer'd him in wrath; for now
The anguish of the deep-fix'd spear grew fierce,
And he desired to draw forth the steel,
And let the blood flow free, and so to die—
But first he would convince his stubborn foe;
And, rising sternly on one arm, he said:—
'Man, who art thou who dost deny my words?
Truth sits upon the lips of dying men,
And falsehood, while I lived, was far from mine.
I tell thee, prick'd upon this arm I bear
That seal which Rustum to my mother gave,
That she might prick it on the babe she bore.'
He spoke; and all the blood left Rustum's cheeks,
And his knees totter'd, and he smote his hand
Against his breast, his heavy mailed hand,
That the hard iron corslet clank'd aloud;
And to his heart he press'd the other hand,
And in a hollow voice he spake, and said:—
'Sohrab, that were a proof which could not lie!
If thou show this, then art thou Rustum's son.'
Then, with weak hasty fingers, Sohrab loosed
His belt, and near the shoulder bared his arm,
And show'd a sign in faint vermilion points
Prick'd; as a cunning workman, in Pekin,
Pricks with vermilion some clear porcelain vase,
An emperor's gift—at early morn he paints,
And all day long, and, when night comes, the lamp
Lights up his studious forehead and thin hands—
So delicately prick'd the sign appear'd
On Sohrab's arm, the sign of Rustum's seal.
It was that griffin, which of old rear'd Zal,
Rustum's great father, whom they left to die,

A helpless babe, among the mountain rocks;
Him that kind creature found, and rear'd, and loved—
Then Rustum took it for his glorious sign.
And Sohrab bared that image on his arm,
And himself scann'd it long with mournful eyes,
And then he touch'd it with his hand and said:—
'How say'st thou? Is that sign the proper sign
Of Rustum's son, or of some other man's?'
He spoke; but Rustum gazed, and gazed, and stood
Speechless; and then he utter'd one sharp cry:
O boy—thy father!—and his voice choked there.
And then a dark cloud pass'd before his eyes,
And his head swam, and he sank down to earth.
But Sohrab crawl'd to where he lay, and cast
His arms about his neck, and kiss'd his lips,
And with fond faltering fingers stroked his cheeks,
Trying to call him back to life; and life
Came back to Rustum, and he oped his eyes,
And they stood wide with horror; and he seized
In both his hands the dust which lay around,
And threw it on his head, and smirch'd his hair,—
His hair, and face, and beard, and glittering arms;
And strong convulsive groaning shook his breast,
And his sobs choked him; and he clutch'd his sword,
To draw it, and for ever let life out.
But Sohrab saw his thought, and held his hands,
And with a soothing voice he spake, and said:—
'Father, forbear! for I but meet to-day
The doom which at my birth was written down
In Heaven, and thou art Heaven's unconscious hand.
Surely my heart cried out that it was thou,
When first I saw thee; and thy heart spoke too,
I know it! but fate trod those promptings down
Under its iron heel; fate, fate engaged
The strife, and hurl'd me on my father's spear.
But let us speak no more of this! I find

My father; let me feel that I have found!
Come, sit beside me on this sand, and take
My head betwixt thy hands, and kiss my cheeks,
And wash them with thy tears, and say: *My son!*
Quick! quick! for numbered are my sands of life,
And swift; for like the lightning to this field
I came, and like the wind I go away—
Sudden, and swift, and like a passing wind.
But it was writ in Heaven that this should be.'
So said he, and his voice released the heart
Of Rustum, and his tears broke forth; he cast
His arms round his son's neck, and wept aloud,
And kiss'd him. And awe fell on both the hosts,
When they saw Rustum's grief; and Ruksh, the horse,
With his head bowing to the ground and mane
Sweeping the dust, came near, and in mute woe
First to the one then to the other moved
His head, as if inquiring what their grief
Might mean; and from his dark, compassionate eyes,
The big warm tears roll'd down, and caked the sand.
But Rustum chid him with stern voice, and said:—
'Ruksh, now thou grievest; but, O Ruksh, thy feet
Should first have rotted on their nimble joints,
Or ere they brought thy master to this field!'
But Sohrab look'd upon the horse and said:—
'Is this, then, Ruksh? How often, in past days,
My mother told me of thee, thou brave steed,
My terrible father's terrible horse! and said,
That I should one day find thy lord and thee.
Come, let me lay my hand upon thy mane!
O Ruksh, thou art more fortunate than I;
For thou hast gone where I shall never go,
And snuff'd the breezes of my father's home.
And thou hast trod the sands of Seistan,
And seen the river of Helmund, and the Lake
Of Zirrah; and the aged Zal himself

Has often stroked thy neck, and given thee food,
Corn in a golden platter soaked with wine,
And said: *O Ruksh! bear Rustum well!*—but I
Have never known my grandsire's furrow'd face,
Nor seen his lofty house in Seistan,
Nor slaked my thirst at the clear Helmund stream;
But lodged among my father's foes, and seen
Afrasiab's cities only, Samarcand,
Bokhara, and lone Khiva in the waste,
And the black Toorkmun tents; and only drunk
The desert rivers, Moorghab and Tejend,
Kohik, and where the Kalmuks feed their sheep,
The northern Sir; and this great Oxus stream,
The yellow Oxus, by whose brink I die.'

Then, with a heavy groan, Rustum bewail'd:—
'Oh, that its waves were flowing over me!
Oh, that I saw its grains of yellow silt
Roll tumbling in the current o'er my head!'

But, with a grave mild voice, Sohrab replied:—
'Desire not that, my father! thou must live.
For some are born to do great deeds, and live,
As some are born to be obscured, and die.
Do thou the deeds I die too young to do,
And reap a second glory in thine age;
Thou art my father, and thy gain is mine.
But come; thou seest this great host of men
Which follow me; I pray thee, slay not these!
Let me intreat for them; what have they done?
They follow'd me, my hope, my fame, my star.
Let them all cross the Oxus back in peace.
But me thou must bear hence, not send with them,
But carry me with thee to Seistan,
And place me on a bed, and mourn for me,
Thou, and the snow-hair'd Zal, and all thy friends.
And thou must lay me in that lovely earth,
And heap a stately mound above my bones,

And plant a far-seen pillar over all.
That so the passing horseman on the waste
May see my tomb a great way off, and cry:
Sohrab, the mighty Rustum's son, lies there,
Whom his great father did in ignorance kill!
And I be not forgotten in my grave.'
And, with a mournful voice, Rustum replied:—
'Fear not! as thou hast said, Sohrab, my son,
So shall it be; for I will burn my tents,
And quit the host, and bear thee hence with me,
And carry thee away to Seistan,
And place thee on a bed, and mourn for thee,
With the snow-headed Zal, and all my friends.
And I will lay thee in that lovely earth,
And heap a stately mound above thy bones,
And plant a far-seen pillar over all,
And men shall not forget thee in thy grave.
And I will spare thy host; yea, let them go!
Let them all cross the Oxus back in peace!
What should I do with slaying any more?
For would that all that I have ever slain
Might be once more alive; my bitterest foes,
And they who were call'd champions in their time,
And through whose death I won that fame I have—
And I were nothing but a common man,
A poor, mean soldier, and without renown,
So thou mightest live too, my son, my son!
Or rather would that I, even I myself,
Might now be lying on this bloody sand,
Near death, and by an ignorant stroke of thine,
Not thou of mine! and I might die, not thou;
And I, not thou, be borne to Seistan;
And Zal might weep above my grave, not thine;
And say: *O son, I weep thee not too sore,*
For willingly, I know, thou met'st thine end!
But now in blood and battles was my youth,

And full of blood and battles is my age,
And I shall never end this life of blood.'
Then, at the point of death, Sohrab replied:—
'A life of blood indeed, thou dreadful man!
But thou shalt yet have peace; only not now,
Not yet! but thou shalt have it on that day,
When thou shalt sail in a high-masted ship,
Thou and the other peers of Kai Khosroo,
Returning home over the salt blue sea,
From laying thy dear master in his grave.'
And Rustum gazed in Sohrab's face, and said:—
'Soon be that day, my son, and deep that sea!
Till then, if fate so wills, let me endure.'
He spoke; and Sohrab smiled on him, and took
The spear, and drew it from his side, and eased
His wound's imperious anguish; but the blood
Came welling from the open gash, and life
Flow'd with the stream;—all down his cold white side
The crimson torrent ran, dim now and soil'd,
Like the soil'd tissue of white violets,
Left, freshly gather'd, on their native bank,
By children whom their nurses call with haste
Indoors from the sun's eye; his head droop'd low,
His limbs grew slack; motionless, white, he lay—
White, with eyes closed; only when heavy gasps,
Deep heavy gasps quivering through all his frame,
Convulsed him back to life, he open'd them,
And fixed them feebly on his father's face;
Till now all strength was ebb'd, and from his limbs
Unwillingly, the spirit fled away,
Regretting the warm mansion which it left,
And youth, and bloom, and this delightful world.
So, on the bloody sand, Sohrab lay dead;
And the great Rustum drew his horseman's cloak
Down o'er his face, and sate by his dead son.
As those black granite pillars, once high-rear'd

By Jemshid in Persepolis, to bear
His house, now mid their broken flights of steps
Lie prone, enormous, down the mountain side—
So in the sand lay Rustum by his son.
And night came down over the solemn waste,
And the two gazing hosts, and that sole pair,
And darken'd all; and a cold fog, with night,
Crept from the Oxus. Soon a hum arose,
As of a great assembly loosed, and fires
Began to twinkle through the fog; for now
Both armies moved to camp, and took their meal;
The Persians took it on the open sands
Southward, the Tartars by the river marge;
And Rustum and his son were left alone.
But the majestic river floated on,
Out of the mist and hum of that low land,
Into the frosty starlight, and there moved,
Rejoicing, through the hush'd Chorasmian waste,
Under the solitary moon;—he flow'd
Right for the polar star, past Orgunjè,
Brimming, and bright, and large; then sands begin
To hem his watery march, and dam his streams,
And split his currents; that for many a league
The shorn and parcell'd Oxus strains along
Through beds of sand and matted rushy isles—
Oxus, forgetting the bright speed he had
In his high mountain-cradle in Pamere,
A foil'd circuitous wanderer—till at last
The long'd-for dash of waves is heard, and wide
His luminous home of waters opens, bright
And tranquil, from whose floor the new-bathed stars
Emerge, and shine upon the Aral Sea.

M. Arnold.

THE RAPE OF THE LOCK

Canto I

What dire offence from am'rous causes springs,
What mighty contests rise from trivial things,
I sing—This verse to Caryll, Muse! is due:
This, ev'n Belinda may vouchsafe to view:
Slight is the subject, but not so the praise,
If she inspire, and he approve my lays.

Say what strange motive, Goddess! could compel
A well-bred lord t' assault a gentle belle?
O say what stranger cause, yet unexplor'd,
Could make a gentle belle reject a lord?
In tasks so bold, can little men engage,
And in soft bosoms dwell such mighty rage?

Sol thro' white curtains shot a tim'rous ray,
And ope'd those eyes that must eclipse the day;
Now lap-dogs give themselves the rousing shake,
And sleepless lovers just at twelve awake;
Thrice rung the bell, the slipper knock'd the ground,
And the press'd watch return'd a silver sound.
Belinda still her downy pillow prest,
Her guardian Sylph prolong'd the balmy rest:
'Twas he had summon'd to her silent bed
The morning dream that hover'd o'er her head;
A youth more glitt'ring than a Birth-night Beau,
(That ev'n in slumber caused her cheek to glow)
Seem'd to her ear his winning lips to lay,
And thus in whispers said, or seem'd to say:

"Fairest of mortals, thou distinguish'd care
Of thousand bright Inhabitants of Air!
If e'er one vision touch'd thy infant thought,
Of all the nurse and all the priest have taught—
Of airy elves by moonlight shadows seen,
The silver token, and the circled green,

Or virgins visited by Angel-pow'rs,
With golden crowns and wreaths of heav'nly flow'rs—
Hear and believe! thy own importance know,
Nor bound thy narrow views to things below.
Some secret truths, from learned pride conceal'd,
To maids alone and children are reveal'd.
What tho' no credit doubting Wits may give?
The fair and innocent shall still believe.
Know, then, unnumber'd Spirits round thee fly,
The light militia of the lower sky:
These, tho' unseen, are ever on the wing,
Hang o'er the Box, and hover round the Ring.
Think what an equipage thou hast in air,
And view with scorn two pages and a chair.
As now your own, our beings were of old,
And once inclos'd in woman's beauteous mould;
Thence by a soft transition, we repair
From earthly vehicles to these of air.
Think not, when woman's transient breath is fled,
That all her vanities at once are dead;
Succeeding vanities she still regards,
And tho' she plays no more, o'erlooks the cards.
Her joy in gilded chariots, when alive,
And love of Ombre, after death survive.
For when the Fair in all their pride expire,
To their first elements their souls retire.
The sprites of fiery termagants in flame
Mount up, and take a Salamander's name.
Soft yielding minds to water glide away,
And sip, with Nymphs, their elemental tea.
The graver prude sinks downward to a Gnome,
In search of mischief still on earth to roam.
The light coquettes in Sylphs aloft repair,
And sport and flutter in the fields of air.
"Know further yet: whoever fair and chaste
Rejects mankind, is by some Sylph embrac'd;

For spirits, freed from mortal laws, with ease
Assume what sexes and what shapes they please.
What guards the purity of melting maids,
In courtly balls and midnight masquerades,
Safe from the treach'rous friend, the daring spark,
The glance by day, the whisper in the dark,
When kind occasion prompts their warm desires,
When music softens, and when dancing fires?
'Tis but their Sylph, the wise Celestials know,
Tho' Honour is the word with men below.
Some Nymphs there are, too conscious of their face,
For life predestin'd to the Gnome's embrace.
These swell their prospects and exalt their pride,
When offers are disdain'd, and love deny'd;
Then gay ideas crowd the vacant brain,
While peers, and dukes, and all their sweeping train,
And garters, stars, and coronets appear,
And in soft sounds, 'Your Grace' salutes their ear.
'Tis these that early taint the female soul,
Instruct the eyes of young coquettes to roll,
Teach infant-cheeks a bidden blush to know,
And little hearts to flutter at a Beau.

"Oft, when the world imagine women stray,
The Sylphs thro' mystic mazes guide their way;
Thro' all the giddy circle they pursue,
And old impertinence expel by new.
What tender maid but must a victim fall
To one man's treat, but for another's ball?
When Florio speaks what virgin could withstand,
If gentle Damon did not squeeze her hand?
With varying vanities, from ev'ry part,
They shift the moving toyshop of their heart;
Where wigs with wigs, with sword-knots sword-knots strive,
Beaux banish beaux, and coaches coaches drive.
This erring mortals levity may call;
Oh blind to truth! the Sylphs contrive it all.

"Of these am I, who thy protection claim,
A watchful sprite, and Ariel is my name.
Late, as I rang'd the crystal wilds of air,
In the clear mirror of thy ruling star
I saw, alas! some dread event impend,
Ere to the main this morning sun descend,
But Heav'n reveals not what, or how, or where.
Warn'd by the Sylph, O pious maid, beware!
This to disclose is all thy guardian can:
Beware of all, but most beware of Man!"
He said; when Shock, who thought she slept too long,
Leap'd up, and wak'd his mistress with his tongue.
'Twas then, Belinda! if report say true,
Thy eyes first open'd on a billet-doux;
Wounds, charms, and ardors were no sooner read,
But all the vision vanish'd from thy head.
And now, unveil'd, the toilet stands display'd,
Each silver vase in mystic order laid.
First, rob'd in white, the nymph intent adores,
With head uncover'd, the cosmetic pow'rs.
A heav'nly image in the glass appears;
To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears.
Th' inferior priestess, at her altar's side,
Trembling begins the sacred rites of Pride.
Unnumber'd treasures ope at once, and here
The various off'rings of the world appear;
From each she nicely culls with curious toil,
And decks the Goddess with the glittering spoil.
This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,
And all Arabia breathes from yonder box;
The tortoise here and elephant unite,
Transform'd to combs, the speckled and the white.
Here files of pins extend their shining rows,
Puffs, powders, patches, bibles, billet-doux.
Now awful beauty puts on all its arms;
The Fair each moment rises in her charms,

Repairs the smiles, awakens ev'ry grace,
And calls forth all the wonders of her face;
Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,
And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes.
The busy Sylphs surround their darling care,
These set the head, and those divide the hair,
Some fold the sleeve, whilst others plait the gown;
And Betty 's prais'd for labors not her own.

Canto II

Not with more glories, in th' etherial plain,
The sun first rises o'er the purpled main,
Than, issuing forth, the rival of his beams
Launch'd on the bosom of the silver Thames.
Fair nymphs, and well-drest youths around her shone,
But ev'ry eye was fixed on her alone.
On her white breast a sparkling cross she wore,
Which Jews might kiss, and infidels adore.
Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,
Quick as her eyes, and as unfix'd as those;
Favors to none, to all she smiles extends;
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.
Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike
And, like the sun, they shine on all alike.
Yet graceful ease, and sweetness void of pride,
Might hide her faults, if belles had faults to hide;
If to her share some female errors fall,
Look on her face, and you'll forget 'em all.
This nymph, to the destruction of mankind,
Nourish'd two locks, which graceful hung behind
In equal curls, and well conspir'd to deck
With shining ringlets the smooth iv'ry neck.
Love in these labyrinths his slaves detains,
And mighty hearts are held in slender chains.

With hairy springes we the birds betray,
Slight lines of hair surprise the finny prey,
Fair tresses man's imperial race ensnare,
And beauty draws us with a single hair.
Th' advent'rous baron the bright locks admir'd;
He saw, he wish'd, and to the prize aspir'd.
Resolv'd to win, he meditates the way,
By force to ravish, or by fraud betray;
For when success a lover's toil attends,
Few ask if fraud or force attain'd his ends.
For this, ere Phœbus rose, he had implor'd
Propitious Heav'n, and ev'ry Pow'r ador'd,
But chiefly Love—to Love an altar built
Of twelve vast French romances, neatly gilt.
There lay three garters, half a pair of gloves,
And all the trophies of his former loves;
With tender billet-doux he lights the pyre,
And breathes three am'rous sighs to raise the fire.
Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent eyes
Soon to obtain, and long possess the prize:
The Pow'rs gave ear, and granted half his pray'r;
The rest the winds dispers'd in empty air.
But now secure the painted vessel glides,
The sun-beams trembling on the floating tides,
While melting music steals upon the sky,
And soften'd sounds along the waters die.
Smooth flow the waves, the zephyrs gently play,
Belinda smil'd, and all the world was gay.
All but the Sylph—with careful thoughts opprest,
Th' impending woe sat heavy on his breast.
He summons strait his denizens of air;
The lucid squadrons round the sails repair:
Soft o'er the shrouds aërial whispers breathe,
That seem'd but zephyrs to the train beneath.
Some to the sun their insect-wings unfold,
Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of gold;

Transparent forms, too fine for mortal sight,
Their fluid bodies half dissolv'd in light,
Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,
Thin glitt'ring textures of the filmy dew,
Dipt in the richest tincture of the skies,
Where light disports in ever-mingling dyes,
While ev'ry beam new transient colors flings,
Colors that change whene'er they wave their wings.
Amid the circle, on the gilded mast,
Superior by the head, was Ariel plac'd;
His purple pinions op'ning to the sun,
He raised his azure wand, and thus begun:
"Ye Sylphs and Sylphids, to your chief give ear!
Fays, Fairies, Genii, Elves, and Demons, hear!
Ye know the spheres and various tasks assign'd
By laws eternal to th' aërial kind.
Some in the fields of purest ether play,
And bask and whiten in the blaze of day:
Some guide the course of wand'ring orbs on high,
Or roll the planets thro' the boundless sky:
Some, less refin'd, beneath the moon's pale light
Pursue the stars that shoot athwart the night,
Or suck the mists in grosser air below,
Or dip their pinions in the painted bow,
Or brew fierce tempests on the wintry main,
Or o'er the glebe distill the kindly rain.
Others on earth o'er human race preside,
Watch all their ways, and all their actions guide:
Of these the chief the care of nations own,
And guard with arms divine the British Throne.
"Our humbler province is to tend the Fair,
Not a less pleasing, tho' less glorious care;
To save the powder from too rude a gale,
Nor let th' imprison'd essences exhale;
To draw fresh colors from the vernal flow'rs;
To steal from rainbows, ere they drop in show'rs,

A brighter wash; to curl their waving hairs,
Assist their blushes, and inspire their airs:
Nay, oft, in dreams invention we bestow,
To change a flounce or add a furbelow.

"This day black omens threat the brightest Fair
That e'er deserv'd a watchful spirit's care;
Some dire disaster, or by force, or slight;
But what, or where, the Fates have wrapt in night.
Whether the nymph shall break Diana's law,
Or some frail China jar receive a flaw;
Or stain her honor, or her new brocade,
Forget her pray'rs, or miss a masquerade,
Or lose her heart, or necklace, at a ball;
Or whether Heav'n has doom'd that Shock must fall.
Haste, then, ye Spirits! to your charge repair:
The flutt'ring fan be Zephyretta's care;
The drops to thee, Brillante, we consign;
And, Momentilla, let the watch be thine;
Do thou, Crispissa, tend her fav'rite Lock;
Ariel himself shall be the guard of Shock.
To fifty chosen Sylphs, of special note,
We trust th' important charge, the petticoat:
Form a strong line about the silver bound,
And guard the wide circumference around.

"Whatever Spirit, careless of his charge,
His post neglects, or leaves the Fair at large,
Shall feel sharp vengeance soon o'ertake his sins:
Be stopp'd in vials, or transfix'd with pins,
Or plung'd in lakes of bitter washes lie,
Or wedg'd whole ages in a bodkin's eye;
Gums and pomatums shall his flight restrain,
While clogg'd he beats his silken wings in vain;
Or alum styptics with contracting pow'r
Shrink his thin essence like a rivell'd flower;
Or, as Ixion fix'd, the wretch shall feel
The giddy motion of the whirling mill,

In fumes of burning chocolate shall glow,
And tremble at the sea that froths below!"
He spoke; the Spirits from the sails descend.
Some, orb in orb, around the nymph extend;
Some thrid the mazy ringlets of her hair;
Some hang upon the pendants of her ear.
With beating hearts the dire event they wait,
Anxious, and trembling for the birth of Fate.

Canto III

Close by those meads, for ever crown'd with flow'rs,
Where Thames with pride surveys his rising tow'rs,
There stands a structure of majestic frame,
Which from the neighb'ring Hampton takes its name.
Here Britain's statesmen oft the fall foredoom
Of foreign tyrants, and of nymphs at home;
Here thou, great Anna! whom three realms obey,
Dost sometimes counsel take—and sometimes tea.
Hither the heroes and the nymphs resort,
To taste awhile the pleasures of a court.
In various talk th' instructive hours they past,
Who gave the ball, or paid the visit last;
One speaks the glory of the British Queen,
And one describes a charming Indian screen;
A third interprets motions, looks, and eyes;
At ev'ry word a reputation dies.
Snuff, or the fan, supply each pause of chat,
With singing, laughing, ogling, *and all that.*
Meanwhile, declining from the noon of day,
The sun obliquely shoots his burning ray;
The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,
And wretches hang that jury-men may dine;
The merchant from th' Exchange returns in peace,
And the long labors of the toilet cease.

Belinda now, whom thirst of fame invites,
Burns to encounter two advent'rous knights,
At Ombre singly to decide their doom,
And swells her breast with conquests yet to come.
Straight the three bands prepare in arms to join,
Each band the number of the sacred nine.
Soon as she spreads her hand, th' aërial guard
Descend, and sit on each important card:
First Ariel perch'd upon a Matadore,
Then each according to the rank they bore;
For Sylphs, yet mindful of their ancient race,
Are, as when women, wondrous fond of place.
Behold four Kings in majesty rever'd,
With hoary whiskers and a forky beard;
And four fair Queens, whose hands sustain a flow'r,
Th' expressive emblem of their softer pow'r;
Four Knaves in garbs succinct, a trusty band,
Caps on their heads, and halberds in their hand;
And particolor'd troops, a shining train,
Draw forth to combat on the velvet plain.
The skilful nymph reviews her force with care;
"Let Spades be trumps!" she said; and trumps they were.
Now move to war her sable Matadores,
In show like leaders of the swarthy Moors.
Spadillio first, unconquerable lord!
Led off two captive trumps, and swept the board.
As many more Manillio forced to yeld,
And march'd a victor from the verdant field.
Him Basto follow'd, but his fate more hard
Gain'd but one trump and one plebeian card.
With his broad sabre next, a chief in years,
The hoary Majesty of Spades appears,
Puts forth one manly leg, to sight reveal'd;
The rest his many-color'd robe conceal'd.
The rebel Knave, who dares his prince engage,
Proves the just victim of his royal rage.

Ev'n mighty Pam, that Kings and Queens o'erthrew,
And mow'd down armies in the fights of Loo,
Sad chance of war! now destitute of aid,
Falls undistinguish'd by the victor Spade.
Thus far both armies to Belinda yield;
Now to the baron Fate inclines the field.
His warlike Amazon her host invades,
Th' imperial consort of the crown of Spades.
The Club's black tyrant first her victim dy'd,
Spite of his haughty mien, and barb'rous pride:
What boots the regal circle on his head,
His giant limbs, in state unwieldy spread,
That long behind he trails his pompous robe,
And of all monarchs only grasps the globe?
The baron now his Diamonds pours apace;
Th' embroider'd King who shows but half his face,
And his refulgent Queen, with pow'rs combin'd,
Of broken troops any easy conquest find.
Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts, in wild disorder seen,
With throngs promiscuous strew the level green.
Thus when dispers'd a routed army runs
Of Asia's troops, and Afric's sable sons,
With like confusion different nations fly,
Of various habit, and of various dye;
The pierc'd battalions disunited fall,
In heaps on heaps; one fate o'erwhelms them all.
The Knave of Diamonds tries his wily arts,
And wins (oh shameful chance!) the Queen of Hearts.
At this the blood the virgin's cheek forsook,
A livid paleness spreads o'er all her look;
She sees, and trembles at th' approaching ill,
Just in the jaws of ruin, and Codille.
And now (as oft in some distemper'd state)
On one nice trick depends the gen'ral fate;
An Ace of Hearts steps forth; the King unseen
Lurk'd in her hand, and mourn'd his captive Queen:

He springs to vengeance with an eager pace,
And falls like thunder on the prostrate Ace.
The nymph exulting fills with shouts the sky;
The walls, the woods, and long canals reply.
Oh thoughtless mortals! ever blind to fate,
Too soon dejected, and too soon elate,
Sudden these honors shall be snatch'd away,
And curs'd for ever this victorious day.
For lo! the board with sups and spoons is crown'd,
The berries crackle, and the mill turns round;
On shining altars of Japan they raise
The silver lamp; the fiery spirits blaze:
From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,
While China's earth receives the smoking tide.
At once they gratify their scent and taste,
And frequent cups prolong the rich repast.
Straight hover round the Fair her airy band;
Some, as she sipp'd, the fuming liquor fann'd,
Some o'er her lap their careful plumes display'd,
Trembling, and conscious of the rich brocade.
Coffee (which makes the politician wise,
And see thro' all things with his half-shut eyes)
Sent up in vapors to the baron's brain
New stratagems, the radiant Lock to gain.
Ah cease, rash youth! desist ere 'tis too late,
Fear the just Gods, and think of Scylla's fate!
Chang'd to a bird, and sent to flit in air,
She dearly pays for Nisus' injur'd hair!
But when to mischief mortals bend their will,
How soon they find fit instruments of ill!
Just then, Clarissa drew with tempting grace
A two-edged weapon from her shining case:
So ladies in romance assist their knight,
Present the spear, and arm him for the fight.
He takes the gift with rev'rence, and extends
The little engine on his fingers' ends;

This just behind Belinda's neck he spread,
As o'er the fragrant steams she bends her head.
Swift to the Lock a thousand sprites repair;
A thousand wings by turns blow back the hair;
And thrice they twitch'd the diamond in her ear;
Thrice she look'd back, and thrice the foe drew near.
Just in that instant, anxious Ariel sought
The close recesses of the virgin's thought;
As on the nosegay in her breast reclin'd,
He watch'd th' ideas rising in her mind,
Sudden he view'd, in spite of all her art,
An earthly lover lurking at her heart.
Amaz'd, confus'd, he found his pow'r expir'd,
Resign'd to fate, and with a sigh retir'd.

The peer now spreads the glitt'ring forfex wide,
T' inclose the Lock; now joins it, to divide.
Ev'n then, before the fatal engine clos'd,
A wretched Sylph too fondly interpos'd;
Fate urg'd the shears, and cut the Sylph in twain
(But airy substance soon unites again).
The meeting points the sacred hair dissever
From the fair head, for ever, and for ever!

Then flash'd the living lightning from her eyes,
And screams of horror rend th' affrighted skies.
Not louder shrieks to pitying Heav'n are cast,
When husbands, or when lapdogs breathe their last;
Or when rich China vessels fall'n from high,
In glittering dust and painted fragments lie!

"Let wreaths of triumph now my temples twine,"
The victor cried; "the glorious prize is mine!
While fish in streams, or birds delight in air,
Or in a coach and six the British Fair,
As long as Atalantis shall be read,
Or the small pillow grace a lady's bed;
While visits shall be paid on solemn days,
When num'rous waxlights in bright order blaze;

While nymphs take treats, or assignations give,
So long my honor, name, and praise shall live!
What Time would spare, from Steel receives its date,
And monuments, like men, submit to Fate!
Steel could the labor of the gods destroy,
And strike to dust th' imperial tow'rs of Troy;
Steel would the works of mortal pride confound
And hew triumphal arches to the ground.
What wonder then, fair Nymph! thy hair should feel
The conqu'ring force of unresisted steel?"

Canto IV

But anxious cares the pensive nymph oppress'd,
And secret passions labor'd in her breast.
Not youthful kings in battle seiz'd alive,
Not scornful virgins who their charms survive,
Not ardent lovers robb'd of all their bliss,
Not ancient ladies when refus'd a kiss,
Not tyrants fierce that unrepenting die,
Not Cynthia when her manteau's pinn'd awry,
E'er felt such rage, resentment, and despair,
As thou, sad Virgin! for thy ravish'd hair.

For, that sad moment, when the Sylph withdrew,
And Ariel weeping from Belinda flew,
Umbriel, a dusky, melancholy sprite,
As ever sullied the fair face of light,
Down to the central earth, his proper scene,
Repair'd to search the gloomy cave of Spleen.

Swift on his sooty pinions flits the Gnome,
And in a vapor reach'd the dismal dome.
No cheerful breeze this sullen region knows,
The dreaded East is all the wind that blows.
Here in a grotto, sheltered close from air,
And screen'd in shades from day's detested glare,

She sighs forever on her pensive bed,
Pain at her side, and Megrim at her head.
Two handmaids wait the throne; alike in place,
But diff'ring far in figure and in face.
Here stood Ill-nature, like an ancient maid,
Her wrinkled form in black and white array'd;
With store of pray'rs for mornings, nights, and noons,
Her hand is fill'd; her bosom with lampoons.
There Affectation, with a sickly mien,
Shows in her cheek the roses of eighteen,
Practis'd to lisp and hang the head aside,
Faints into airs and languishes with pride;
On the rich quilt sinks with becoming woe,
Wrapt in a gown for sickness and for show.
The fair ones feel such maladies as these,
When each new night-dress gives a new disease.
A constant vapor o'er the palace flies,
Strange phantoms rising as the mists arise,
Dreadful as hermit's dreams in haunted shades,
Or bright as visions of expiring maids:
Now glaring fiends, and snakes on rolling spires,
Pale spectres, gaping tombs, and purple fires;
Now lakes of liquid gold, Elysian scenes,
And crystal domes, and angels in machines.
Unnumber'd throngs on every side are seen,
Of bodies chang'd to various forms by Spleen.
Here living Tea-pots stand, one arm held out,
One bent; the handle this, and that the spout;
A Pipkin there, like Homer's tripod, walks;
Here sighs a Jar, and there a Goose-pie talks;
Men prove with child, as pow'rful fancy works,
And maids turn'd bottles call aloud for corks.
Safe pass'd the Gnome thro' this fantastic band,
A branch of healing spleenwort in his hand.
Then thus address'd the Pow'r—"Hail, wayward Queen!
Who rule the sex to fifty from fifteen;

Parent of Vapors and of female wit,
Who give th' hysteric or poetic fit;
On various tempers act by various ways,
Make some take physic, others scribble plays;
Who cause the proud their visits to delay,
And send the godly in a pet to pray!
A nymph there is, that all thy pow'r disdains,
And thousands more in equal mirth maintains.
But, oh! if e'er thy Gnome could spoil a grace,
Or raise a pimple on a beauteous face,
Like citron-waters matrons' cheeks inflame,
Or change complexions at a losing game;
Or caus'd suspicion when no soul was rude,
Or discompos'd the head-dress of a prude,
Or e'er to costive lapdog gave disease,
Which not the tears of brightest eyes could ease,
Hear me, and touch Belinda with chagrin;
That single act gives half the world the spleen."

The Goddess, with a discontented air,
Seems to reject him, tho' she grants his pray'r.
A wond'rous Bag with both her hands she binds,
Like that where once Ulysses held the winds;
There she collects the force of female lungs,
Sighs, sobs, and passions, and the war of tongues.
A Vial next she fills with fainting fears,
Soft sorrows, melting griefs, and flowing tears.
The Gnome rejoicing bears her gifts away,
Spreads his black wings, and slowly mounts to day.

Sunk in Thalestris' arms the nymph he found,
Her eyes dejected, and her hair unbound.
Full o'er their heads the swelling Bag he rent,
And all the Furies issued at the vent.
Belinda burns with more than mortal ire,
And fierce Thalestris fans the rising fire.
"O wretched maid!" she spread her hands, and cry'd
(While Hampton's echoes, "Wretched maid!" replied),

"Was it for this you took such constant care
The bodkin, comb, and essence to prepare?
For this your locks in paper durance bound?
For this with tort'ring irons wreath'd around?
For this with fillets strain'd your tender head,
And bravely bore the double loads of lead?
Gods! shall the ravisher display your hair,
While the fops envy, and the ladies stare?
Honor forbid! at whose unrivall'd shrine
Ease, Pleasure, Virtue, all, our sex resign.
Methinks already I your tears survey,
Already hear the horrid things they say,
Already see you a degraded toast,
And all your honor in a whisper lost!
How shall I then your helpless fame defend?
'Twill then be infamy to seem your friend!
And shall this prize, th' inestimable prize,
Expos'd through crystal to the gazing eyes,
And heighten'd by the diamond's circling rays,
On that rapacious hand forever blaze?
Sooner shall grass in Hyde-Park Circus grow,
And Wits take lodgings in the sound of Bow;
Sooner let earth, air, sea, to chaos fall,
Men, monkeys, lapdogs, parrots, perish all!"
  She said; then raging to Sir Plume repairs,
And bids the beau demand the precious hairs
(Sir Plume, of amber snuff-box justly vain,
And the nice conduct of a clouded cane):
With earnest eyes, and round unthinking face,
He first the snuff-box open'd, then the case,
And thus broke out—"My lord, why, what the devil!
Zounds! damn the Lock! 'fore Gad, you must be civil!
Plague on 't! 'tis past a jest—nay prithee, pox!
Give her the hair"—he spoke, and rapp'd his box.
  "It grieves me much," reply'd the peer again,
"Who speaks so well should ever speak in vain;

But by this Lock, this sacred Lock I swear
(Which never more shall join its parted hair;
Which never more its honors shall renew,
Clipp'd from the lovely head where late it grew),
That, while my nostrils draw the vital air,
This hand, which won it, shall for ever wear."
He spoke; and speaking, in proud triumph spread
The long-contended honors of her head.

But Umbriel, hateful Gnome! forbears not so;
He breaks the Vial whence the sorrows flow.
Then see! the nymph in beauteous grief appears,
Her eyes half languishing, half drown'd in tears;
On her heav'd bosom hung her drooping head,
Which, with a sigh, she rais'd; and thus she said:

"For ever curs'd be this detested day,
Which snatch'd my best, my fav'rite curl away!
Happy! ah, ten times happy had I been,
If Hampton Court these eyes had never seen!
Yet am not I the first mistaken maid,
By love of courts to num'rous ills betray'd.
O had I rather unadmir'd remain'd
In some lone isle, or distant northern land,
Where the gilt chariot never marks the way,
Where none learn Ombre, none e'er taste Bohea!
There kept my charms conceal'd from mortal eye,
Like roses, that in deserts bloom and die.
What mov'd my mind with youthful lords to roam?
O had I stay'd, and said my pray'rs at home!
'Twas this, the morning omens seem'd to tell:
Thrice from my trembling hand the patch-box fell;
The tottering china shook without a wind;
Nay, Poll sat mute, and Shock was most unkind!
A Sylph too warn'd me of the threats of fate,
In mystic visions, now believ'd too late!
See the poor remnants of these slighted hairs!
My hands shall rend what ev'n thy rapine spares.

These, in two sable ringlets taught to break,
Once gave new beauties to the snowy neck;
The sister lock now sits uncouth, alone,
And in its fellow's fate foresees its own;
Uncurl'd it hangs, the fatal shears demands,
And tempts once more thy sacrilegious hands.
Oh hadst thou, cruel! been content to seize
Hairs less in sight, or any hairs but these!"

Canto V

She said: the pitying audience melt in tears;
But Fate and Jove had stopp'd the baron's ears.
In vain Thalestris with reproach assails;
For who can move when fair Belinda fails?
Not half so fix'd the Trojan could remain,
While Anna begg'd and Dido rag'd in vain.
Then grave Clarissa graceful wav'd her fan;
Silence ensu'd, and thus the nymph began:
"Say, why are beauties prais'd and honor'd most,
The wise man's passion, and the vain man's toast?
Why deck'd with all that land and sea afford,
Why angels call'd, and angel-like ador'd?
Why round our coaches crowd the white-glov'd beaux?
Why bows the side-box from its inmost rows?
How vain are all these glories, all our pains,
Unless good sense preserve what beauty gains,
That men may say, when we the front-box grace,
'Behold the first in virtue as in face!'
Oh! if to dance all night, and dress all day,
Charm'd the small-pox, or chas'd old age away;
Who would not scorn what housewife's cares produce,
Or who would learn one earthly thing of use?
To patch, nay ogle, might become a saint;
Nor could it sure be such a sin to paint.

But since, alas! frail beauty must decay;
Curl'd or uncurl'd, since locks will turn to gray;
Since painted, or not painted, all shall fade,
And she who scorns a man, must die a maid;
What then remains but well our pow'r to use,
And keep good-humor still whate'er we lose?
And trust me, dear! good-humor can prevail,
When airs, and flights, and screams, and scolding fail.
Beauties in vain their pretty eyes may roll;
Charms strike the sight, but merit wins the soul."
So spoke the dame, but no applause ensu'd;
Belinda frowned, Thalestris call'd her prude.
"To arms, to arms!" the fierce virago cries,
And swift as lightning to the combat flies.
All side in parties, and begin th' attack;
Fans clap, silks rustle, and tough whalebones crack;
Heroes' and heroines' shouts confus'dly rise,
And bass, and treble voices strike the skies.
No common weapons in the hands are found;
Like gods they fight, nor dread a mortal wound.
So when bold Homer makes the gods engage,
And heav'nly breasts with human passions rage;
'Gainst Pallas, Mars; Latona, Hermes arms;
And all Olympus rings with loud alarms;
Jove's thunder roars, heav'n trembles all around;
Blue Neptune storms, the bellowing deeps resound;
Earth shakes her nodding tow'rs, the ground gives way,
And the pale ghosts start at the flash of day!
Triumphant Umbriel, on a sconce's height,
Clapp'd his glad wings, and sate to view the fight.
Propp'd on their bodkin spears, the sprites survey
The growing combat, or assist the fray.
While thro' the press enraged Thalestris flies,
And scatters death around from both her eyes,
A beau and witling perish'd in the throng;
One died in metaphor, and one in song.

"O cruel nymph! a living death I bear,"
Cried Dapperwit, and sunk beside his chair.
A mournful glance Sir Fopling upward cast;
"Those eyes are made so killing"—was his last.
Thus on Mæander's flow'ry margin lies
Th' expiring swan, and as he sings he dies.

When bold Sir Plume had drawn Clarissa down,
Chloe stepp'd in, and kill'd him with a frown;
She smil'd to see the doughty hero slain,
But, at her smile, the beau reviv'd again.

Now Jove suspends his golden scales in air,
Weighs the men's wits against the lady's hair;
The doubtful beam long nods from side to side;
At length the wits mount up, the hairs subside.

See, fierce Belinda on the baron flies,
With more than usual lightning in her eyes;
Nor fear'd the chief th' unequal fight to try,
Who sought no more than on his foe to die.
But this bold lord, with manly strength endu'd,
She with one finger and a thumb subdu'd:
Just where the breath of life his nostrils drew,
A charge of snuff the wily virgin threw;
The Gnomes direct, to ev'ry atom just,
The pungent grains of titillating dust.
Sudden with starting tears each eye o'erflows,
And the high dome re-echoes to his nose.

"Now meet thy fate," incens'd Belinda cry'd,
And drew a deadly bodkin from her side.
(The same his ancient personage to deck,
Her great-great-grandsire wore about his neck,
In three seal-rings; which after, melted down,
Form'd a vast buckle for his widow's gown;
Her infant grandame's whistle next it grew,
The bells she jingled, and the whistle blew;
Then in a bodkin grac'd her mother's hairs,
Which long she wore, and now Belinda wears.)

"Boast not my fall," he cried, "insulting foe!
Thou by some other shalt be laid as low.
Nor think, to die dejects my lofty mind:
All that I dread is leaving you behind!
Rather than so, ah let me still survive,
And burn in Cupid's flames—but burn alive."
"Restore the Lock!" she cries; and all around
"Restore the Lock!" the vaulted roofs rebound.
Not fierce Othello in so loud a strain
Roar'd for the handkerchief that caus'd his pain.
But see how oft ambitious aims are cross'd,
And chiefs contend till all the prize is lost!
The Lock, obtain'd with guilt, and kept with pain,
In ev'ry place is sought, but sought in vain.
With such a prize no mortal must be blest,
So heav'n decrees! with heav'n who can contest?
Some thought it mounted to the lunar sphere,
Since all things lost on earth are treasur'd there.
There heroes' wits are kept in pond'rous vases,
And beaux in snuff-boxes and tweezer-cases.
There broken vows and death-bed alms are found,
And lovers' hearts with ends of riband bound,
The courtier's promises, and sick man's pray'rs,
The smiles of harlots, and the tears of heirs,
Cages for gnats, and chains to yoke a flea,
Dried butterflies, and tomes of casuistry.
But trust the Muse—she saw it upward rise,
Tho' mark'd by none but quick poetic eyes;
(So Rome's great founder to the heav'ns withdrew,
To Proculus alone confess'd in view)
A sudden star, it shot thro' liquid air,
And drew behind a radiant trail of hair.
Not Berenice's locks first rose so bright,
The heav'ns bespangling with dishevell'd light.
The Sylphs behold it kindling as it flies,
And pleas'd pursue its progress thro' the skies.

This the beau monde shall from the Mall survey,
And hail with music its propitious ray.
This the blest lover shall for Venus take,
And send up vows from Rosamonda's lake;
This Partridge soon shall view in cloudless skies,
When next he looks thro' Galileo's eyes;
And hence th' egregious wizard shall foredoom
The fate of Louis, and the fall of Rome.

Then cease, bright Nymph! to mourn thy ravish'd hair
Which adds new glory to the shining sphere!
Not all the tresses that fair head can boast,
Shall draw such envy as the Lock you lost:
For after all the murders of your eye,
When, after millions slain, yourself shall die:
When those fair suns shall set, as set they must,
And all those tresses shall be laid in dust,
This Lock the Muse shall consecrate to fame,
And 'midst the stars inscribe Belinda's name.

A. Pope.

LYRIC POEMS

POEMS OF JOY IN LIFE

HUNTING SONG

WAKEN, lords and ladies gay,
On the mountain dawns the day;
All the jolly chase is here
With hawk and horse and hunting-spear;
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
Merrily merrily mingle they,
'Waken, lords and ladies gay.'

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
The mist has left the mountain gray,
Springlets in the dawn are steaming,
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming;
And foresters have busy been
To track the buck in thicket green;
Now we come to chant our lay
'Waken, lords and ladies gay.'

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
To the greenwood haste away;
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot and tall of size;
We can show the marks he made
When 'gainst the oak his antlers fray'd;
You shall see him brought to bay;
'Waken, lords and ladies gay.'

Louder, louder chant the lay
Waken, lords and ladies gay!

Tell them youth and mirth and glee
Run a course as well as we;
Time, stern huntsman! who can baulk,
Stanch as hound and fleet as hawk;
Think of this, and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay!

Sir W. Scott.

A WET SHEET AND A FLOWING SEA

A WET sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast
And fills the white and rustling sail
And bends the gallant mast;
And bends the gallant mast, my boys,
While like the eagle free
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on the lee.

O for a soft and gentle wind!
I heard a fair one cry;
But give to me the snoring breeze
And white waves heaving high;
And white waves heaving high, my lads,
The good ship tight and free—
The world of waters is our home,
And merry men are we.

There's tempest in yon hornéd moon
And lightning in yon cloud;
But hark the music, mariners!
The wind is piping loud;
The wind is piping loud, my boys,
The lightning flashes free—
While the hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.

A. Cunningham.

BICYCLING SONG

A Boy's Song

With lifted feet, hands still,
I am poised, and down the hill
Dart, with heedful mind:
The air goes by in a wind.

Swifter and yet more swift
Till the heart, with a mighty lift,
Makes the lungs laugh, the throat cry—
'O bird, see; see, bird, I fly.

'Is this, is this your joy,
O bird, then I, though a boy,
For a golden moment share
Your feathery life in air!'

Say, heart, is there aught like this
In a world that is full of bliss?
'Tis more than skating, bound
Steel-shod to the level ground.

Speed slackens now, I float
Awhile in my airy boat;
Till when the wheels scarce crawl,
My feet to the pedals fall.

Alas that the longest hill
Must end in a vale; but still
Who climbs with toil, wheresoe'er,
Shall find wings waiting there!

H. C. Beeching.

UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE

Under the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat—
Come hither, come hither, come hither!
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats
And pleased with what he gets—
Come hither, come hither, come hither!
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

W. Shakspere.

COUNSEL TO GIRLS

Gather ye rose-buds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying:
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious Lamp of Heaven, the Sun,
The higher he's a-getting
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times, still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time;
And while ye may, go marry:
For having lost but once your prime,
You may for ever tarry.

R. Herrick.

IT WAS A LOVER AND HIS LASS

It was a lover and his lass
With a hey and a ho, and a hey nonino!
That o'er the green corn-field did pass
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing hey ding a ding:
Sweet lovers love the Spring.

Between the acres of the rye
These pretty country folks would lie:
This carol they began that hour,
How that life was but a flower:

And therefore take the present time
With a hey and a ho, and a hey nonino!
For love is crownéd with the prime
In spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing hey ding a ding:
Sweet lovers love the Spring.

W. Shakspere.

UP AT A VILLA—DOWN IN THE CITY

(*As distinguished by an Italian person of quality*)

Had I but plenty of money, money enough and to spare,
The house for me, no doubt, were a house in the city-square.
Ah, such a life, such a life, as one leads at the window there!

Something to see, by Bacchus, something to hear, at least!
There, the whole day long, one's life is a perfect feast;
While up at a villa one lives, I maintain it, no more than a beast.

Well now, look at our villa! stuck like the horn of a bull
Just on a mountain's edge as bare as the creature's skull,
Save a mere shag of a bush with hardly a leaf to pull!
—I scratch my own, sometimes, to see if the hair's turned wool.

But the city, oh the city—the square with the houses! Why?
They are stone-faced, white as a curd, there's something to take the eye!
Houses in four straight lines, not a single front awry!
You watch who crosses and gossips, who saunters, who hurries by:
Green blinds, as a matter of course, to draw when the sun gets high;
And the shops with fanciful signs which are painted properly.

What of a villa? Though winter be over in March by rights,
'Tis May perhaps ere the snow shall have withered well off the heights:

You've the brown ploughed land before, where the oxen steam and wheeze,
And the hills over-smoked behind by the faint grey olive trees.

Is it better in May, I ask you? You've summer all at once;
In a day he leaps complete with a few strong April suns!
'Mid the sharp short emerald wheat, scarce risen three fingers well,
The wild tulip, at end of its tube, blows out its great red bell,
Like a thin clear bubble of blood, for the children to pick and sell.

Is it ever hot in the square? There's a fountain to spout and splash!
In the shade it sings and springs; in the shine such foam-bows flash
On the horses with curling fish-tails, that prance and paddle and pash
Round the lady atop in the conch—fifty gazers do not abash,
Though all that she wears is some weeds round her waist in a sort of sash!

All the year round at the villa, nothing's to see though you linger,
Except yon cypress that points like Death's lean lifted fore-finger.
Some think fireflies pretty, when they mix in the corn and mingle,
Or thrid the stinking hemp till the stalks of it seem a-tingle.

Late August or early September, the stunning cicala is shrill,
And the bees keep up their tiresome whine round the resinous firs on the hill.
Enough of the seasons,—I spare you the months of the fever and chill.

Ere opening your eyes in the city, the blessed church-bells begin:
No sooner the bells leave off, than the diligence rattles in;
You get the pick of the news, and it costs you never a pin.
By and by there's the travelling doctor gives pills, lets blood, draws teeth;
Or the Pulcinello-trumpet breaks up the market beneath.
At the post-office such a scene-picture—the new play piping hot!
And a notice how, only this morning, three liberal thieves were shot.
Above it, behold the archbishop's most fatherly of rebukes,
And beneath, with his crown and his lion, some little new law of the Duke's!
Or a sonnet with flowery marge, to the Reverend Don So-and-so
Who is Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarca, St. Jerome, and Cicero,
"And moreover," (the sonnet goes rhyming), "the skirts of St. Paul has reached,
Having preached us those six Lent-lectures more unctuous than ever he preached."
Noon strikes,—here sweep the procession! our lady borne smiling and smart
With a pink gauze gown all spangles, and seven swords stuck in her heart!
Bang, whang, whang, goes the drum, *tootle-te-tootle* the fife;
No keeping one's haunches still: it's the greatest pleasure in life.

But bless you, it's dear—it's dear! fowls, wine, at double the rate.
They have clapped a new tax upon salt, and what oil pays passing the gate
It's a horror to think of. And so, the villa for me, not the city!
Beggars can scarcely be choosers—but still—ah, the pity, the pity!
Look two and two go the priests, then the monks with cowls and sandals,
And the penitents dressed in white skirts, a-holding the yellow candles.
One, he carries a flag up straight, and another a cross with handles,
And the Duke's guard brings up the rear, for the better prevention of scandals.
Bang, whang, whang, goes the drum, *tootle-te-tootle* the fife.
Oh, a day in the city-square, there is no such pleasure in life!

R. Browning.

POEMS OF COURTSHIP AND LOVE

WHO IS SYLVIA?

Who is Sylvia? What is she,
  That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she;
  The heaven such grace doth lend her,
That she might admired be.

Is she kind as she is fair?
  For beauty lives with kindness.
Love doth to her eyes repair
  To help him of his blindness,
And, being helped, inhabits there.

Then to Sylvia let us sing
  That Sylvia is excelling;
She excels each mortal thing
  Upon the dull earth dwelling.
To her let us garlands bring.

W. Shakspere.

THE INDIAN SERENADE

I arise from dreams of Thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low
And the stars are shining bright:
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet

Hath led me—who knows how?
To thy chamber-window, Sweet!

The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream—
The champak odours fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
The nightingale's complaint
It dies upon her heart,
As I must die on thine
O belovéd as thou art!

Oh lift me from the grass!
I die, I faint, I fail!
Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast;
Oh! press it close to thine again
Where it will break at last.

P. B. Shelley.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY, LIKE THE NIGHT

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies,
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes;
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress

Or softly lightens o'er her face,
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek and o'er that brow
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow
But tell of days in goodness spent,—
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent.

Lord Byron.

TO CELIA

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine;
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
I would not change for thine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honouring thee
As giving it a hope that there
It could not wither'd be;
But thou thereon didst only breathe
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself but thee!

B. Jonson.

O MY LUVE'S LIKE A RED, RED ROSE

O my Luve's like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June:
O my Luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luve am I:
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry:

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun;
I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only Luve!
And fare thee weel awhile;
And I will come again, my Luve,
Tho' it were ten thousand mile.

R. Burns.

A SERENADE

Ah! County Guy, the hour is nigh,
The sun has left the lea,
The orange-flower perfumes the bower,
The breeze is on the sea.
The lark, his lay who thrill'd all day,
Sits hush'd his partner nigh;
Breeze, bird, and flower confess the hour,
But where is County Guy?

The village maid steals through the shade
Her shepherd's suit to hear;
To Beauty shy, by lattice high,
Sings high-born Cavalier.

The star of Love, all stars above,
Now reigns o'er earth and sky,
And high and low the influence know—
But where is County Guy?

Sir W. Scott.

HARK, HARK! THE LARK

Hark, Hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phœbus gins arise
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes;
With everything that pretty is,
My lady sweet, arise,
Arise, arise.

W. Shakspere.

TO LUCASTA, ON GOING TO THE WARS

Tell me not, Sweet, I am unkind
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind,
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore;
I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
Loved I not Honour more.

Colonel Lovelace.

YE BANKS AND BRAES O' BONNIE DOON

Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye blume sae fair!
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care!

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird
That sings upon the bough;
Thou minds me o' the happy days
When my fause Luve was true.

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate.

Aft hae I roved by bonnie Doon
To see the woodbine twine,
And ilka bird sang o' its love;
And sae did I o' mine.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Frae aff its thorny tree;
And my fause luver staw the rose,
But left the thorn wi' me.

R. Burns.

JEAN

Of a' the airts the wind can blaw
I dearly like the West,
For there the bonnie lassie lives,
The lassie I lo'e best:

There wild woods grow, and rivers row,
And mony a hill between;
But day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
I see her sweet and fair:
I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
I hear her charm the air.
There's not a bonnie flower that springs
By fountain, shaw, or green,
There's not a bonnie bird that sings
But minds me o' my Jean.

R. Burns.

WHEN WE TWO PARTED

When we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted,
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this!

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow;
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame:
I hear thy name spoken
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me—
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee
Who knew thee too well:
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met:
In silence I grieve
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee?—
With silence and tears.

Lord Byron.

SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT

She was a Phantom of delight
When first she gleam'd upon my sight;
A lovely Apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair;
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful dawn;
A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A Spirit, yet a Woman too!

Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin-liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food,
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death:
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect Woman, nobly plann'd
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel-light.

W. Wordsworth.

ONE WORD IS TOO OFTEN PROFANED

One word is too often profaned
For me to profane it,
One feeling too falsely disdain'd
For thee to disdain it.
One hope is too like despair
For prudence to smother,
And pity from thee more dear
Than that from another.

I can give not what men call love;
But wilt thou accept not

The worship the heart lifts above
And the Heavens reject not:
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow?

P. B. Shelley.

THE YOUNG MAY MOON

The young May moon is beaming, love,
The glow-worm's lamp is gleaming, love,
How sweet to rove
Through Morna's grove,
When the drowsy world is dreaming, love!
Then awake!—the heavens look bright, my dear,
'Tis never too late for delight, my dear,
And the best of all ways
To lengthen our days,
Is to steal a few hours from the night, my dear!

Now all the world is sleeping, love,
But the Sage, his star-watch keeping, love,
And I, whose star,
More glorious far,
Is the eye from that casement peeping, love.
Then awake!—till rise of sun, my dear,
The Sage's glass we'll shun, my dear,
Or, in watching the flight
Of bodies of light,
He might happen to take thee for one, my dear.

T. Moore.

THERE BE NONE OF BEAUTY'S DAUGHTERS

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like Thee;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me:
When, as if its sound were causing
The charmed ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lulled winds seem dreaming:

And the midnight moon is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep,
Whose breast is gently heaving
As an infant's asleep:
So the spirit bows before thee
To listen and adore thee;
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

Lord Byron.

THE ROVER

A WEARY lot is thine, fair maid,
A weary lot is thine!
To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,
And press the rue for wine.
A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien,
A feather of the blue,
A doublet of the Lincoln green—
No more of me you knew
My Love!
No more of me you knew.

'This morn is merry June, I trow,
The rose is budding fain;
But she shall bloom in winter snow
Ere we two meet again.'
He turn'd his charger as he spake
Upon the river shore,
He gave the bridle-reins a shake,
Said 'Adieu for evermore
My Love!
And adieu for evermore.'

Sir W. Scott.

LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY

The fountains mingle with the river
And the rivers with the ocean,
The winds of heaven mix forever
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single,
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle—
Why not I with thine?

See the mountains kiss high heaven,
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister-flower would be forgiven
If it disdain'd its brother:
And the sunlight clasps the earth,
And the moonbeams kiss the sea—
What are all these kissings worth,
If thou kiss not me?

P. B. Shelley.

I TRAVELL'D AMONG UNKNOWN MEN

I TRAVELL'D among unknown men
In lands beyond the sea;
Nor, England! did I know till then
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream!
Nor will I quit thy shore
A second time; for still I seem
To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel
The joy of my desire;
And she I cherish'd turn'd her wheel
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings show'd, thy nights conceal'd
The bowers where Lucy play'd;
And thine too is the last green field
That Lucy's eyes survey'd.

W. Wordsworth.

ECHO

How sweet the answer Echo makes
To music at night
When, roused by lute or horn, she wakes,
And far away o'er lawns and lakes
Goes answering light!

Yet Love hath echoes truer far
And far more sweet
Than e'er, beneath the moonlight's star,
Of horn or lute or soft guitar
The songs repeat.

'Tis when the sigh,—in youth sincere
And only then,
The sigh that's breathed for one to hear
Is by that one, that only Dear
Breathed back again.

T. Moore.

JOHN ANDERSON

John Anderson my jo, John,
When we were first acquent
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonnie brow was brent;
But now your brow is bald, John,
Your locks are like the snow;
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson my jo.

John Anderson my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither,
And mony a canty day, John,
We've had wi ane anither:
Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson my jo.

R. Burns.

ALL FOR LOVE

O talk not to me of a name great in story;
The days of our youth are the days of our glory;
And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty
Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow that is wrinkled?
'Tis but as a dead flower with May-dew besprinkled:
Then away with all such from the head that is hoary—
What care I for the wreaths that can only give glory?

Oh fame!—if I e'er took delight in thy praises,
'Twas less for the sake of thy high-sounding phrases,
Than to see the bright eyes of the dear one discover
She thought that I was not unworthy to love her.

There chiefly I sought thee, there only I found thee;
Her glance was the best of the rays that surround thee;
When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright in my story,
I knew it was love, and I felt it was glory.

Lord Byron.

I FEAR THY KISSES, GENTLE MAIDEN

I FEAR thy kisses, gentle maiden;
Thou needest not fear mine;
My spirit is too deeply laden
Ever to burthen thine.

I fear thy mien, thy tones, thy motion;
Thou needest not fear mine;
Innocent is the heart's devotion
With which I worship thine.

P. B. Shelley.

POEMS ON BEREAVEMENT AND DEATH

REQUIESCAT

Strew on her roses, roses,
And never a spray of yew!
In quiet she reposes;
Ah! would that I did too.

Her mirth the world required;
She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
In mazes of heat and sound;
But for peace her soul was yearning,
And now peace laps her round.

Her cabined, ample spirit,
It fluttered and failed for breath;
To-night it doth inherit
The vasty hall of death.

M. Arnold.

SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WAYS

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove;
A maid whom there were none to praise,
And very few to love.

A violet by a mossy stone
Half-hidden from the eye!
—Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me!

W. Wordsworth.

THE EDUCATION OF NATURE

Three years she grew in sun and shower;
Then Nature said, 'A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown:
This Child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A lady of my own.

'Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse: and with me
The girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

'She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And her's shall be the breathing balm,
And her's the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

'The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Ev'n in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mould the maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

'The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

'And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell.'

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run!
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm and quiet scene;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.

W. Wordsworth.

SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal;
I had no human fears:
She seem'd a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;
She neither hears nor sees;
Roll'd round in earth's diurnal course
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

W. Wordsworth.

ON SOUTHEY'S DEATH

Friends, hear the words my wandering thoughts would say
And cast them into shape some other day;
Southey, my friend of forty years, is gone,
And shattered by the fall, I stand alone.

W. S. Landor.

HIGHLAND MARY

Ye banks and braes and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie!
There simmer first unfauld her robes,
And there the langest tarry;
For there I took the last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloom'd the gay green birk,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As underneath their fragrant shade
I clasp'd her to my bosom!
The golden hours on angel wings
Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me as light and life
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow and lock'd embrace
Our parting was fu' tender;
And pledging aft to meet again,
We tore oursels asunder;
But, Oh! fell Death's untimely frost,
That nipt my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
That wraps my Highland Mary!

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips,
I aft hae kiss'd sae fondly!
And closed for aye the sparkling glance
That dwelt on me sae kindly;
And mouldering now in silent dust
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

R. Burns.

THE DEATH BED

We watch'd her breathing thro' the night,
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seem'd to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers
To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied—
We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed—she had
Another morn than ours.

T. Hood.

ELEGY

Oh snatch'd away in beauty's bloom!
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year,
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom:

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
And feed deep thought with many a dream,
And lingering pause and lightly tread;
Fond wretch! as if her step disturb'd the dead!

Away! we know that tears are vain,
That Death nor heeds nor hears distress:
Will this unteach us to complain?
Or make one mourner weep the less?
And thou, who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

Lord Byron.

IN MEMORIAM

A child's a plaything for an hour;
Its pretty tricks we try
For that or for a longer space,—
Then tire, and lay it by.

But I knew one that to itself
All seasons could control;
That would have mock'd the sense of pain
Out of a grievéd soul.

Thou straggler into loving arms,
Young climber up of knees,
When I forgot thy thousand ways
Then life and all shall cease!

M. Lamb.

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell forever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour:—
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault
If memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or flattery soothe the dull cold ear of death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre:

But knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes

Their lot forbad: nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbad to wade thro' slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind;

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of luxury and pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenour of their way.

Yet e'en these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unletter'd Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply:
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
E'en from the tomb the voice of nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of th' unhonour'd dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall enquire thy fate,—

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
'Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn;

'There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noon-tide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

'Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove;
Now drooping, woeful-wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

'One morn I miss'd him on the custom'd hill,
Along the heath, and near his favourite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

'The next with dirges due in sad array
Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne,—
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.'

THE EPITAPH

Here rests his head upon the lap of earth
A youth, to fortune and to fame unknown;
Fair science frown'd not on his humble birth
And melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
Heaven did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to misery (all he had) a tear,
He gain'd from Heaven ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

T. Gray.

HESTER

When maidens such as Hester die
Their place ye may not well supply,
Though ye among a thousand try
With vain endeavour.
A month or more hath she been dead,
Yet cannot I by force be led
To think upon the wormy bed
And her together.

A springy motion in her gait,
A rising step, did indicate
Of pride and joy no common rate
That flush'd her spirit:
I know not by what name beside
I shall it call: if 'twas not pride,
It was a joy to that allied
She did inherit.

Her parents held the Quaker rule,
Which doth the human feeling cool;
But she was train'd in Nature's school,
Nature had blest her.
A waking eye, a prying mind,
A heart that stirs, is hard to bind;
A hawk's keen sight ye cannot blind,
Ye could not Hester.

My sprightly neighbour! gone before
To that unknown and silent shore,
Shall we not meet, as heretofore
Some summer morning—

When from thy cheerful eyes a ray
Hath struck a bliss upon the day,
A bliss that would not go away,
A sweet fore-warning?

C. Lamb.

ELEGY ON THYRZA

And thou art dead, as young and fair
As aught of mortal birth;
And form so soft and charms so rare
Too soon return'd to Earth!
Though Earth received them in her bed,
And o'er the spot the crowd may tread
In carelessness or mirth,
There is an eye which could not brook
A moment on that grave to look.

I will not ask where thou liest low
Nor gaze upon the spot;
There flowers or weeds at will may grow
So I behold them not:
It is enough for me to prove
That what I loved, and long must love,
Like common earth can rot;
To me there needs no stone to tell
'Tis Nothing that I loved so well.

Yet did I love thee to the last,
As fervently as thou
Who didst not change through all the past
And canst not alter now.
The love where Death has set his seal

Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,
  Nor falsehood disavow:
And, what were worse, thou canst not see
Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

The better days of life were ours;
  The worst can be but mine:
The sun that cheers, the storm that lours,
  Shall never more be thine.
The silence of that dreamless sleep
I envy now too much to weep;
  Nor need I to repine
That all those charms have pass'd away
I might have watch'd through long decay.

The flower in ripen'd bloom unmatch'd
  Must fall the earliest prey;
Though by no hand untimely snatch'd,
  The leaves must drop away.
And yet it were a greater grief
To watch it withering, leaf by leaf,
  Than see it pluck'd today;
Since earthly eye but ill can bear
To trace the change to foul from fair.

I know not if I could have borne
  To see thy beauties fade;
The night that follow'd such a morn
  Had worn a deeper shade:
Thy day without a cloud hath past,
And thou wert lovely to the last,
  Extinguish'd, not decay'd;
As stars that shoot along the sky
Shine brightest as they fall from high.

As once I wept, if I could weep,
My tears might well be shed
To think I was not near, to keep
One vigil o'er thy bed:
To gaze, how fondly! on thy face,
To fold thee in a faint embrace,
Uphold thy drooping head;
And show that love, however vain,
Nor thou nor I can feel again.

Yet how much less it were to gain,
Though thou hast left me free,
The loveliest things that still remain
Than thus remember thee!
The all of thine that cannot die
Through dark and dread Eternity
Returns again to me,
And more thy buried love endears
Than aught except its living years.

Lord Byron.

EVELYN HOPE

Beautiful Evelyn Hope is dead!
Sit and watch by her side an hour.
This is her book-shelf, this her bed;
She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,
Beginning to die too, in the glass;
Little has yet been changed, I think:
The shutters are shut, no light may pass
Save two long rays through the hinge's chink.

Sixteen years old when she died!
Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name;
It was not her time to love; beside,
Her life had many a hope and aim,

Duties enough and little cares,
And now was quiet, now astir,
Till God's hand beckoned unawares,—
And the sweet white brow is all of her.

Is it too late then, Evelyn Hope?
What, your soul was pure and true,
The good stars met in your horoscope,
Made you of spirit, fire and dew—
And, just because I was thrice as old
And our paths in the world diverged so wide.
Each was naught to each, must I be told?
We were fellow mortals, naught beside?

No, indeed! for God above
Is great to grant, as mighty to make,
And creates the love to reward the love:
I claim you still, for my own love's sake!
Delayed it may be for more lives yet,
Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few:
Much is to learn, much to forget
Ere the time be come for taking you.

But the time will come,—at last it will,
When, Evelyn Hope, what meant (I shall say)
In the lower earth, in the years long still,
That body and soul so pure and gay?
Why your hair was amber, I shall divine,
And your mouth of your own geranium's red—
And what you would do with me, in fine,
In the new life come in the old one's stead.

I have lived (I shall say) so much since then,
Given up myself so many times,
Gained me the gains of various men,
Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes;

Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full scope,
  Either I missed or itself missed me:
And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope!
  What is the issue? Let us see!

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while!
  My heart seemed full as it could hold;
There was place and to spare for the frank young smile,
  And the red young mouth, and the hair's young gold.
So, hush,—I will give you this leaf to keep:
  See, I shut it inside the sweet cold hand!
There, that is our secret: go to sleep!
  You will wake, and remember, and understand.

R. Browning.

AGNES.

I saw her in childhood—
  A bright, gentle thing,
Like the dawn of the morn,
  Or the dews of the spring:
The daisies and hare-bells
  Her playmates all day;
Herself as light-hearted
  And artless as they.

I saw her again—
  A fair girl of eighteen,
Fresh glittering with graces
  Of mind and of mien.
Her speech was all music;
  Like moonlight she shone;
The envy of many,
  The glory of one.

Years, years fleeted over—
I stood at her foot:
The bud had grown blossom,
The blossom was fruit.
A dignified mother,
Her infant she bore;
And look'd, I thought, fairer
Than ever before.

I saw her once more—
'Twas the day that she died;
Heaven's light was around her,
And God at her side;
No wants to distress her,
No fears to appal—
O then, I felt, then
She was fairest of all!

H. F. Lyte.

GLEN-ALMAIN, THE NARROW GLEN

In this still place, remote from men,
Sleeps Ossian, in the Narrow Glen;
In this still place, where murmurs on
But one meek streamlet, only one:
He sang of battles, and the breath
Of stormy war, and violent death;
And should, methinks, when all was past,
Have rightfully been laid at last
Where rocks were rudely heap'd, and rent
As by a spirit turbulent;
Where sights were rough, and sounds were wild,
And everything unreconciled;

In some complaining, dim retreat,
For fear and melancholy meet;
But this is calm; there cannot be
A more entire tranquillity.

Does then the Bard sleep here indeed?
Or is it but a groundless creed?
What matters it?—I blame them not
Whose fancy in this lonely spot
Was moved; and in such way express'd
Their notion of its perfect rest.
A convent, even a hermit's cell,
Would break the silence of this Dell:
It is not quiet, is not ease;
But something deeper far than these:
The separation that is here
Is of the grave; and of austere
Yet happy feelings of the dead:
And, therefore, was it rightly said
That Ossian, last of all his race!
Lies buried in this lonely place.

W. Wordsworth.

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done;
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won;
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring:
But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills;
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding;
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;
Here, Captain! dear father!
This arm beneath your head;
It is some dream that on the deck,
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are cold and still;
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will;
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done;
From fearful trip, the victor ship, comes in with object won:
Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells!
But I, with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

W. Whitman.

CORONACH

He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The font reappearing
From the raindrops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper
  Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
  Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing
  Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing
  When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,
  Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
  How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain,
  Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
  Thou art gone; and for ever!

Sir W. Scott.

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS

One more Unfortunate
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!
Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements;
Whilst the wave constantly

Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully;
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly;
Not of the stains of her—
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
Rash and undutiful:
Past all dishonour,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family—
Wipe those poor lips of hers
Oozing so clammily.

Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses;
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home?

Who was her father?
Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun!
Oh! it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
Feelings had changed:
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence;
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood, with amazement,
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver
But not the dark arch,
Or the black flowing river:
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery
Swift to be hurl'd—
Any where, any where
Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly,
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran,—

Over the brink of it,
Picture it—think of it,
Dissolute Man!
Lave in it, drink of it,
Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
Decently, kindly,
Smooth and compose them,
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
Thro' muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fix'd on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurr'd by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest.
—Cross her hands humbly
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast!

Owning her weakness,
Her evil behaviour,
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins to her Saviour.

T. Hood.

THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS

We walk'd along, while bright and red
Uprose the morning sun;
And Matthew stopp'd, he look'd, and said
'The will of God be done!'

A village schoolmaster was he,
With hair of glittering gray;
As blithe a man as you could see
On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass
And by the steaming rills
We travell'd merrily, to pass
A day among the hills.

'Our work,' said I, 'was well begun;
Then, from thy breast what thought,
Beneath so beautiful a sun,
So sad a sigh has brought?'

A second time did Matthew stop;
And fixing still his eye
Upon the eastern mountain-top,
To me he made reply:

'Yon cloud with that long purple cleft
Brings fresh into my mind
A day like this, which I have left
Full thirty years behind.

'And just above yon slope of corn
Such colours, and no other,
Were in the sky that April morn,
Of this the very brother.

'With rod and line I sued the sport
Which that sweet season gave,
And to the church-yard come, stopp'd short
Beside my daughter's grave.

'Nine summers had she scarcely seen,
The pride of all the vale;
And then she sang,—she would have been
A very nightingale.

'Six feet in earth my Emma lay;
And yet I loved her more—
For so it seem'd,—than till that day
I e'er had loved before.

'And turning from her grave, I met,
Beside the church-yard yew,
A blooming Girl, whose hair was wet
With points of morning dew.

'A basket on her head she bare;
Her brow was smooth and white:
To see a child so very fair,
It was a pure delight!

'No fountain from its rocky cave
E'er tripp'd with foot so free;
She seem'd as happy as a wave
That dances on the sea.

'There came from me a sigh of pain
Which I could ill confine;
I look'd at her, and look'd again:
And did not wish her mine!'

—Matthew is in his grave, yet now
Methinks I see him stand
As at that moment, with a bough
Of wilding in his hand.

W. Wordsworth.

ODE WRITTEN IN 1746

How sleep the brave, who sink to rest
By all their country's wishes blest!
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallow'd mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung:
There Honour comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Freedom shall awhile repair
To dwell a weeping hermit there!

W. Collins.

POEMS ON THE WORLD OF NATURE

A BOY'S SONG

Where the pools are bright and deep,
Where the grey trout lies asleep,
Up the river and o'er the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the blackbird sings the latest,
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,
Where the nestlings chirp and flee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the mowers mow the cleanest,
Where the hay lies thickest and greenest;
There to trace the homeward bee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the hazel bank is steepest,
Where the shadow falls the deepest,
Where the clustering nuts fall free,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Why the boys should drive away
Little maidens from their play,
Or love to banter and fight so well,
That's the thing I never could tell.

But this I know, I love to play,
Through the meadow, among the hay:
Up the water and o'er the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

J. Hogg.

ODE TO THE NORTHEAST WIND

Welcome, wild Northeaster!
Shame it is to see
Odes to every zephyr;
Ne'er a verse to thee.
Welcome, black Northeaster!
O'er the German foam;
O'er the Danish moorlands,
From thy frozen home.
Tired we are of summer,
Tired of gaudy glare,
Showers soft and steaming,
Hot and breathless air.
Tired of listless dreaming,
Through the lazy day;
Jovial wind of winter
Turn us out to play!
Sweep the golden reed-beds;
Crisp the lazy dyke;
Hunger into madness
Every plunging pike.
Fill the lake with wild-fowl;
Fill the marsh with snipe;
While on dreary moorlands
Lonely curlew pipe.
Through the black fir forest
Thunder harsh and dry,
Shattering down the snowflakes
Off the curdled sky.
Hark! the brave Northeaster!
Breast-high lies the scent,
On by holt and headland,
Over heath and bent.
Chime, ye dappled darlings,
Through the sleet and snow,

Who can override you?
  Let the horses go!
Chime, ye dappled darlings,
  Down the roaring blast;
You shall see a fox die
  Ere an hour be past.
Go! and rest to-morrow,
  Hunting in your dreams,
While our skates are ringing
  O'er the frozen streams.
Let the luscious South-wind
  Breathe in lovers' sighs,
While the lazy gallants
  Bask in ladies' eyes.
What does he but soften
  Heart alike and pen?
'Tis the hard gray weather
  Breeds hard English men.
What's the soft Southwester?
  'Tis the ladies' breeze,
Bringing home their true loves
  Out of all the seas;
But the black Northeaster,
  Through the snowstorm hurled,
Drives our English hearts of oak,
  Seaward round the world!
Come! as came our fathers,
  Heralded by thee,
Conquering from the eastward
  Lords by land and sea.
Come! and strong within us
  Stir the Vikings' blood;
Bracing brain and sinew;
  Blow, thou wind of God!

C. Kingsley.

CLEAR AND COOL

Clear and cool, clear and cool,
By laughing shallow and dreaming pool;
Cool and clear, cool and clear,
By shining shingle and foaming weir;
Under the crag where the ousel sings,
And the ivied wall where the church-bell rings,
Undefiled, for the undefiled;
Play by me, bathe in me, mother and child.

Dank and foul, dank and foul,
By the smoky town in its murky cowl;
Foul and dank, foul and dank,
By wharf and sewer and slimy bank;
Darker and darker the farther I go,
Baser and baser the richer I grow;
Who dare sport with the sin-defiled?
Shrink from me, turn from me, mother and child.

Strong and free, strong and free,
The flood gates are open, away to the sea,
Free and strong, free and strong,
Cleansing my streams as I hurry along,
To the golden sands, and the leaping bar,
And the taintless tide that awaits me afar.
As I lose myself in the infinite main,
Like a soul that has sinned and is pardoned again,
Undefiled, for the undefiled;
Play by me, bathe in me, mother and child.

C. Kingsley.

TO THE EVENING STAR

Gem of the crimson-colour'd Even,
Companion of retiring day,
Why at the closing gates of heaven,
Beloved Star, dost thou delay?

So fair thy pensile beauty burns
When soft the tear of twilight flows;
So due thy plighted love returns
To chambers brighter than the rose;

To Peace, to Pleasure, and to Love
So kind a star thou seem'st to be,
Sure some enamour'd orb above
Descends and burns to meet with thee.

Thine is the breathing, blushing hour
When all unheavenly passions fly,
Chased by the soul-subduing power
Of Love's delicious witchery.

O! sacred to the fall of day
Queen of propitious stars, appear,
And early rise, and long delay,
When Caroline herself is here!

Shine on her chosen green resort
Whose trees the sunward summit crown,
And wanton flowers, that well may court
An angel's feet to tread them down:—

Shine on her sweetly scented road
Thou star of evening's purple dome,
That lead'st the nightingale abroad,
And guid'st the pilgrim to his home.

Shine where my charmer's sweeter breath
Embalms the soft exhaling dew,
Where dying winds a sigh bequeath
To kiss the cheek of rosy hue:—

Where, winnow'd by the gentle air,
Her silken tresses darkly flow
And fall upon her brow so fair,
Like shadows on the mountain snow.

Thus, ever thus, at day's decline
In converse sweet to wander far—
O bring with thee my Caroline,
And thou shalt be my Ruling Star!

T. Campbell.

SONG TO THE EVENING STAR

Star that bringest home the bee,
And sett'st the weary labourer free!
If any star shed peace, 'tis Thou
That send'st it from above,
Appearing when Heaven's breath and brow
Are sweet as hers we love.

Come to the luxuriant skies,
Whilst the landscape's odours rise,
Whilst far-off lowing herds are heard
And songs when toil is done,
From cottages whose smoke unstirr'd
Curls yellow in the sun.

Star of love's soft interviews,
Parted lovers on thee muse;

Their remembrancer in Heaven
Of thrilling vows thou art,
Too delicious to be riven
By absence from the heart.

T. Campbell.

THE DAFFODILS

I WANDER'D lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils,
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretch'd in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:—
A Poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company!
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought;

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

W. Wordsworth.

TO THE DAISY

With little here to do or see
Of things that in the great world be,
Sweet Daisy! oft I talk to thee
For thou art worthy,
Thou unassuming Common-place
Of Nature, with that homely face,
And yet with something of a grace
Which Love makes for thee!

Oft on the dappled turf at ease
I sit and play with similes,
Loose types of things through all degrees,
Thoughts of thy raising;
And many a fond and idle name
I give to thee, for praise or blame
As is the humour of the game,
While I am gazing.

A nun demure, of lowly port;
Or sprightly maiden, of Love's court,
In thy simplicity the sport
Of all temptations;
A queen in crown of rubies drest;
A starveling in a scanty vest;
Are all, as seems to suit thee best,
Thy appellations.

A little Cyclops, with one eye
Staring to threaten and defy,
That thought comes next—and instantly
The freak is over,
The shape will vanish, and behold!

A silver shield with boss of gold
That spreads itself, some faery bold
In fight to cover.

I see thee glittering from afar—
And then thou art a pretty star,
Not quite so fair as many are
In heaven above thee!
Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest;—
May peace come never to his nest
Who shall reprove thee!

Sweet Flower! for by that name at last
When all my reveries are past
I call thee, and to that cleave fast,
Sweet silent Creature!
That breath'st with me in sun and air,
Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
My heart with gladness, and a share
Of thy meek nature!

W. Wordsworth.

THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS *

This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
Sails the unshadowed main,—
The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In Gulfs enchanted, where the Siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
And the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming hair.

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Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
And every chambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
Before thee lies revealed,—
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed!

Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap, forlorn;
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathèd horn!
While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that sings:—

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

O. W. Holmes.

TO A MOUSE,

ON TURNING HER UP IN HER NEST, WITH THE PLOUGH, NOVEMBER, 1785

Wee, sleekit, cowrin, tim'rous beastie,
O what a panic 's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickerin' brattle!
I wad be laith to rin and chase thee,
Wi' murd'rin' pattle!

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,
An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen icker in a thrave
S a sma' request:
I'll get a blessing wi' the lave,
And never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin'!
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,
O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin',
Baith snell an' keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin' fast,

An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell,
Till, crash! the cruel coulter past
Out thro' thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,
But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
An' cranreuch cauld!

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft agley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief and pain,
For promised joy.

Still thou art blest, compared wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But, och! I backward cast my e'e
On prospects drear!
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear!

R. Burns.

TO A SKYLARK

Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest,
Like a cloud of fire,
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun
O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run,
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight:

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflow'd.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody;—

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aerial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embower'd
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflower'd,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-wingéd thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awaken'd flowers
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus hymeneal
Or triumphal chaunt
Match'd with thine, would be all
But an empty vaunt—
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am listening now!

P. B. Shelley.

TO THE SKYLARK

Ethereal minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!
Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound?
Or while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground?
Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,
Those quivering wings composed, that music still!

To the last point of vision, and beyond
Mount, daring warbler!—that love-promoted strain
—'Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond—
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain:
Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege! to sing
All independent of the leafy Spring.

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;
A privacy of glorious light is thine,
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood
Of harmony, with instinct more divine;
Type of the wise, who soar, but never roam—
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home.

W. Wordsworth.

TO THE CUCKOO

O BLITHE new-comer! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice:
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass
Thy twofold shout I hear;
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off and near.

Though babbling only to the vale
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery;

The same whom in my school-boy days
I listen'd to; that Cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green;
And thou wert still a hope, a love;
Still long'd for, never seen!

And I can listen to thee yet;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blesséd Bird! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, faery place,
That is fit home for Thee!

W. Wordsworth.

THE EAGLE

He clasps the crag with hookèd hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls;
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

A. Tennyson.

TO A WATERFOWL *

Whither, 'midst falling dew
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocky billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean side?

*Reprinted from Bryant's Complete Poems, by permission of D. Appleton and Company.

There is a power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,—
The desert and illimitable air,—
Lone wondering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend,
Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet, on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.

W. C. Bryant.

TO THE MOON

Art thou pale for weariness
Of climbing heaven, and gazing on the earth,
Wandering companionless
Among the stars that have a different birth,—
And ever-changing, like a joyless eye
That finds no object worth its constancy?

P. B. Shelley.

TO THE NIGHT

Swiftly walk over the western wave,
Spirit of Night!
Out of the misty eastern cave
Where, all the long and lone daylight,
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear
Which make thee terrible and dear,—
Swift be thy flight!

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray
Star-inwrought;
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day,
Kiss her until she be wearied out:
Then wander o'er city and sea and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand—
Come, long-sought!

When I arose and saw the dawn,
I sigh'd for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turn'd to his rest
Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sigh'd for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried
Wouldst thou me?
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmur'd like a noon-tide bee
Shall I nestle near thy side?
Wouldst thou me?—And I replied
No, not thee!

Death will come when thou art dead,
Soon, too soon—
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, belovéd Night—
Swift be thine approaching flight,
Come soon, soon!

P. B. Shelley.

NATURE AND THE POET

Suggested by a Picture of Peele Castle in a Storm, painted by Sir George Beaumont

I was thy neighbour once, thou rugged Pile!
Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee:
I saw thee every day; and all the while
Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air!
So like, so very like, was day to day!
Whene'er I look'd, thy image still was there;
It trembled, but it never pass'd away.

How perfect was the calm! It seem'd no sleep,
No mood, which season takes away, or brings:
I could have fancied that the mighty Deep
Was even the gentlest of all gentle things.

Ah! then—if mine had been the painter's hand
To express what then I saw; and add the gleam,
The light that never was on sea or land,
The consecration, and the Poet's dream,—

I would have planted thee, thou hoary pile,
Amid a world how different from this!
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile;
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

Thou shouldst have seem'd a treasure-house divine
Of peaceful years; a chronicle of heaven;—
Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine
The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A picture had it been of lasting ease,
Elysian quiet, without toil or strife;
No motion but the moving tide; a breeze;
Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
Such picture would I at that time have made;
And seen the soul of truth in every part,
A steadfast peace that might not be betray'd.

So once it would have been,—'tis so no more;
I have submitted to a new control:
A power is gone, which nothing can restore;
A deep distress hath humanized my soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold
A smiling sea, and be what I have been:
The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old;
This, which I know, I speak with mind serene.

Then, Beaumont, Friend! who would have been the friend
If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore,
This work of thine I blame not, but commend;
This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

O 'tis a passionate work!—yet wise and well,
Well chosen is the spirit that is here;
That hulk which labours in the deadly swell,
This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear!

And this huge Castle, standing here sublime,
I love to see the look with which it braves,
—Cased in the unfeeling armour of old time—
The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling waves.

—Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,
Housed in a dream, at distance from the Kind!
Such happiness, wherever it be known,
Is to be pitied; for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,
And frequent sights of what is to be borne!
Such sights, or worse, as are before me here:—
Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.

W. Wordsworth.

THE INVITATION

Best and brightest, come away,—
Fairer far than this fair Day,
Which, like thee, to those in sorrow
Comes to bid a sweet good-morrow
To the rough year just awake
In its cradle on the brake.
The brightest hour of unborn Spring
Through the winter wandering,
Found, it seems, the halcyon morn
To hoar February born;
Bending from heaven, in azure mirth,

It kiss'd the forehead of the earth,
And smiled upon the silent sea,
And bade the frozen streams be free,
And waked to music all their fountains,
And breathed upon the frozen mountains,
And like a prophetess of May
Strew'd flowers upon the barren way,
Making the wintry world appear
Like one on whom thou smilest, dear.

Away, away, from men and towns,
To the wild wood and the downs—
To the silent wilderness
Where the soul need not repress
Its music, lest it should not find
An echo in another's mind,
While the touch of Nature's art
Harmonizes heart to heart.

Radiant Sister of the Day
Awake! arise! and come away!
To the wild woods and the plains,
To the pools where winter rains
Image all their roof of leaves,
Where the pine its garland weaves
Of sapless green, and ivy dun,
Round stems that never kiss the sun;
Where the lawns and pastures be
And the sandhills of the sea;
Where the melting hoar-frost wets
The daisy-star that never sets,
And wind-flowers and violets
Which yet join not scent to hue
Crown the pale year weak and new;

When the night is left behind
In the deep east, dim and blind,
And the blue noon is over us,
And the multitudinous
Billows murmur at our feet,
Where the earth and ocean meet,
And all things seem only one
In the universal Sun.

P. B. Shelley.

THE RECOLLECTION

Now the last day of many days
All beautiful and bright as thou,
The loveliest and the last, is dead:
Rise, Memory, and write its praise!
Up—to thy wonted work! come, trace
The epitaph of glory fled,
For now the earth has changed its face,
A frown is on the heaven's brow.

We wander'd to the Pine Forest
  That skirts the Ocean's foam;
The lightest wind was in its nest,
  The tempest in its home.
The whispering waves were half asleep,
  The clouds were gone to play,
And on the bosom of the deep
  The smile of heaven lay;
It seem'd as if the hour were one
  Sent from beyond the skies
Which scatter'd from above the sun
  A light of Paradise!

We paused amid the pines that stood
The giants of the waste,
Tortured by storms to shapes as rude
As serpents interlaced,—
And soothed by every azure breath
That under heaven is blown,
To harmonies and hues beneath,
As tender as its own:
Now all the tree-tops lay asleep
Like green waves on the sea,
As still as in the silent deep
The ocean-woods may be.

How calm it was!—The silence there
By such a chain was bound,
That even the busy woodpecker
Made stiller with her sound
The inviolable quietness;
The breath of peace we drew
With its soft motion made not less
The calm that round us grew.
There seem'd, from the remotest seat
Of the white mountain waste
To the soft flower beneath our feet,
A magic circle traced,—
A spirit interfused around,
A thrilling silent life;
To momentary peace it bound
Our mortal nature's strife;—
And still I felt the centre of
The magic circle there
Was one fair form that fill'd with love
The lifeless atmosphere.

We paused beside the pools that lie
Under the forest bough;

Each seem'd as 'twere a little sky
Gulf'd in a world below;
A firmament of purple light
Which in the dark earth lay,
More boundless than the depth of night
And purer than the day—
In which the lovely forests grew
As in the upper air,
More perfect both in shape and hue
Than any spreading there.
There lay the glade and neighbouring lawn,
And through the dark-green wood
The white sun twinkling like the dawn
Out of a speckled cloud.
Sweet views which in our world above
Can never well be seen
Were imaged in the water's love
Of that fair forest green:
And all was interfused beneath
With an Elysian glow,
An atmosphere without a breath,
A softer day below.
Like one beloved, the scene had lent
To the dark water's breast
Its every leaf and lineament
With more than truth exprest;
Until an envious wind crept by,
Like an unwelcome thought
Which from the mind's too faithful eye
Blots one dear image out.
—Though thou art ever fair and kind,
The forests ever green,
Less oft is peace in Shelley's mind
Than calm in waters seen!

P. B. Shelley.

THE BEECH TREE'S PETITION

O LEAVE this barren spot to me!
Spare, woodman, spare the beechen tree!
Though bush or floweret never grow
My dark unwarming shade below;
Nor summer bud perfume the dew
Of rosy blush, or yellow hue;
Nor fruits of autumn, blossom-born,
My green and glossy leaves adorn;
Nor murmuring tribes from me derive
Th' ambrosial amber of the hive;
Yet leave this barren spot to me:
Spare, woodman, spare the beechen tree!

Thrice twenty summers I have seen
The sky grow bright, the forest green;
And many a wintry wind have stood
In bloomless, fruitless solitude,
Since childhood in my pleasant bower
First spent its sweet and sportive hour;
Since youthful lovers in my shade
Their vows of truth and rapture made,
And on my trunk's surviving frame
Carved many a long-forgotten name.
Oh! by the sighs of gentle sound,
First breathed upon this sacred ground;
By all that Love has whisper'd here,
Or Beauty heard with ravish'd ear;
As Love's own altar honour me:
Spare, woodman, spare the beechen tree!

T. Campbell.

TO THE HIGHLAND GIRL OF INVERSNEYDE

Sweet Highland Girl, a very shower
Of beauty is thy earthly dower!
Twice seven consenting years have shed
Their utmost bounty on thy head:
And these gray rocks, that household lawn,
Those trees—a veil just half withdrawn,
This fall of water that doth make
A murmur near the silent lake,
This little bay, a quiet road
That holds in shelter thy abode;
In truth together ye do seem
Like something fashion'd in a dream;
Such forms as from their covert peep
When earthly cares are laid asleep!
But O fair Creature! in the light
Of common day, so heavenly bright,
I bless Thee, Vision as thou art,
I bless thee with a human heart:
God shield thee to thy latest years!
Thee neither know I nor thy peers:
And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray
For thee when I am far away;
For never saw I mien or face
In which more plainly I could trace
Benignity and home-bred sense
Ripening in perfect innocence.
Here scatter'd, like a random seed,
Remote from men, Thou dost not need
The embarrass'd look of shy distress,
And maidenly shamefacédness:

Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
The freedom of a Mountaineer:
A face with gladness overspread;
Soft smiles, by human kindness bred;
And seemliness complete, that sways
Thy courtesies, about thee plays;
With no restraint, but such as springs
From quick and eager visitings
Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach
Of thy few words of English speech:
A bondage sweetly brook'd, a strife
That gives thy gestures grace and life!
So have I, not unmoved in mind,
Seen birds of tempest-loving kind—
Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull
For thee who art so beautiful?
O happy pleasure! here to dwell
Beside thee in some heathy dell;
Adopt your homely ways, and dress,
A shepherd, thou a shepherdess!
But I could frame a wish for thee
More like a grave reality:
Thou art to me but as a wave
Of the wild sea: and I would have
Some claim upon thee, if I could,
Though but of common neighbourhood.
What joy to hear thee, and to see!
Thy elder brother I would be,
Thy father—anything to thee.

Now thanks to Heaven! that of its grace
Hath led me to this lonely place:
Joy have I had; and going hence
I bear away my recompence.

In spots like these it is we prize
Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes:
Then why should I be loth to stir?
I feel this place was made for her;
To give new pleasure like the past,
Continued long as life shall last.
Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,
Sweet Highland Girl! from thee to part;
For I, methinks, till I grow old
As fair before me shall behold
As I do now, the cabin small,
The lake, the bay, the waterfall;
And Thee, the Spirit of them all!

W. Wordsworth.

THE REAPER

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago:
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again!

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;—
I listen'd, motionless and still;
And as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore
Long after it was heard no more.

W. Wordsworth.

MY HEART LEAPS UP WHEN I BEHOLD

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began,
So is it now I am a man,
So be it when I shall grow old
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man:
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

W. Wordsworth.

POEMS OF LOYALTY AND PATRIOTISM

CONCORD HYMN *

SUNG AT THE COMPLETION OF THE BATTLE MONUMENT, APRIL 19, 1836

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set to-day a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

R. W. Emerson.

* By permission of Houghton Mifflin Company.

YE MARINERS OF ENGLAND

Ye Mariners of England
That guard our native seas!
Whose flag has braved, a thousand years,
The battle and the breeze!
Your glorious standard launch again
To match another foe:
And sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long
And the stormy winds do blow.

The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave—
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And Ocean was their grave:
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long
And the stormy winds do blow.

Britannia needs no bulwarks,
No towers along the steep;
Her march is o'er the mountain-waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak
She quells the floods below—
As they roar on the shore,
When the stormy winds do blow;
When the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The meteor flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn;
Till danger's troubled night depart
And the star of peace return.
Then, then, ye ocean-warriors!
Our song and feast shall flow
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow;
When the fiery fight is heard no more,
And the storm has ceased to blow.

T. Campbell.

PRO PATRIA MORI

When he who adores thee has left but the name
Of his fault and his sorrows behind,
Oh! say wilt thou weep, when they darken the fame
Of a life that for thee was resigned!
Yes, weep, and however my foes may condemn,
Thy tears shall efface their decree;
For, Heaven can witness, though guilty to them,
I have been but too faithful to thee.

With thee were the dreams of my earliest love;
Every thought of my reason was thine:
In my last humble prayer to the Spirit above
Thy name shall be mingled with mine!
Oh! blest are the lovers and friends who shall live
The days of thy glory to see;
But the next dearest blessing that Heaven can give
Is the pride of thus dying for thee.

T. Moore.

BANNOCKBURN: ROBERT BRUCE'S ADDRESS TO HIS ARMY

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,
Welcome to your gory bed,
  Or to Victorie.

Now's the day, and now's the hour;
See the front o' battle lower;
See approach proud Edward's power—
  Chains and Slaverie!

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
  Let him turn and flee!

Wha' for Scotland's King and Law,
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Free-man stand, or Free-man fa'?
  Let him on wi' me!

By Oppression's woes and pains!
By your Sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
  But they *shall* be free!

Lay the proud Usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!—
  Let us Do, or Die!

R. Burns.

HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD

Oh, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brush-wood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now!

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows!
Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower
—Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

R. Browning.

HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM THE SEA

Nobly, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the Northwest died away;
Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into Cadiz Bay;
Bluish 'mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar lay;
In the dimmest Northeast distance dawned Gibraltar grand and gray;

'Here and here did England help me: how can I help England?'—say,
Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God to praise and pray,
While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent over Africa.

R. Browning.

THE LOST LEADER

Just for a handful of silver he left us,
Just for a riband to stick in his coat—
Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,
Lost all the others she lets us devote;
They, with the gold to give, doled him out silver,
So much was theirs who so little allowed:
How all our copper had gone for his service!
Rags—were they purple, his heart had been proud!
We that had loved him so, followed him, honored him,
Lived in his mild and magnificent eye,
Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,
Made him our pattern to live and to die!
Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,
Burns, Shelley, were with us,—they watch from their graves!
He alone breaks from the van and the freemen,
—He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves!
We shall march prospering,—not through his presence;
Songs may inspirit us,—not from his lyre;
Deeds will be done,—while he boasts his quiescence,
Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade aspire:
Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul more,
One task more declined, one more footpath untrod,
One more devils'-triumph and sorrow for angels,
One wrong more to man, one more insult to God!

Life's night begins: let him never come back to us!
There would be doubt, hesitation and pain,
Forced praise on our part—the glimmer of twilight,
Never glad confident morning again!
Best fight on well, for we taught him—strike gallantly,
Menace our heart ere we master his own;
Then let him receive the new knowledge and wait us,
Pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne!

R. Browning.

CAVALIER TUNES

I. Marching Along

Kentish Sir Byng stood for his King,
Bidding the crop-headed Parliament swing:
And, pressing a troop unable to stoop,
And see the rogues flourish and honest folk droop,
Marched them along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song.

God for King Charles! Pym and such carles
To the Devil that prompts 'em their treasonous parles!
Cavaliers, up! Lips from the cup,
Hands from the pasty, nor bite take nor sup
Till you're—

Chorus.—Marching along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song.

Hampton to hell, and his obsequies' knell.
Serve Hazelrig, Fiennes, and young Harry as well!
England, good cheer! Rupert is near!
Kentish and loyalists, keep we not here,

Chorus.—Marching along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song?

Then, God for King Charles! Pym and his snarles
To the Devil that pricks on such pestilent carles!
Hold by the right, you double your might;
So, onward to Nottingham, fresh from the fight,
CHORUS.—March we along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song!

II. GIVE A ROUSE

KING CHARLES, and who'll do him right now?
King Charles, and who's ripe for fight now?
Give a rouse: here's, in hell's despite now,
King Charles!

Who gave me the goods that went since?
Who raised me the house that sank once?
Who helped me to gold I spent since?
Who found me in wine you drank once?
CHO.—King Charles, and who'll do him right now?
King Charles, and who's ripe for fight now?
Give a rouse: here's, in hell's despite now,
King Charles!

To whom used my boy George quaff else,
By the old fool's side that begot him?
For whom did he cheer and laugh else,
While Noll's damned troopers shot him?
CHO.—King Charles, and who'll do him right now?
King Charles, and who's ripe for fight now?
Give a rouse: here's, in hell's despite now,
King Charles!

III. BOOT AND SADDLE

BOOT, saddle, to horse, and away!
Rescue my castle before the hot day
Brightens to blue from its silvery gray.
CHO.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!

Ride past the suburbs, asleep as you'd say;
Many's the friend there, will listen and pray
'God's luck to gallants that strike up the lay—
CHO.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!'

Forty miles off, like a roebuck at bay,
Flouts Castle Brancepeth the Roundheads' array:
Who laughs, 'Good fellows ere this, by my fay,
CHO.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!'

Who? My wife Gertrude, that, honest and gay,
Laughs when you talk of surrendering, 'Nay!
I've better counsellors; what counsel they?
CHO.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!'

R. Browning.

POEMS ON THE PROBLEM OF LIFE

CHARACTER OF A HAPPY LIFE

How happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another's will;
Whose armour is his honest thought
And simple truth his utmost skill!

Whose passions not his masters are,
Whose soul is still prepared for death,
Untied unto the world by care
Of public fame, or private breath;

Who envies none that chance doth raise
Nor vice; Who never understood
How deepest wounds are given by praise;
Nor rules of state, but rules of good:

Who hath his life from rumours freed,
Whose conscience is his strong retreat;
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,
Nor ruin make oppressors great;

Who God doth late and early pray
More of His grace than gifts to lend;
And entertains the harmless day
With a religious book or friend;

—This man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise, or fear to fall;
Lord of himself, though not of lands;
And having nothing, yet hath all.

Sir H. Wotton.

THE RIVER OF LIFE

The more we live, more brief appear
Our life's succeeding stages:
A day to childhood seems a year,
And years like passing ages.

The gladsome current of our youth,
Ere passion yet disorders,
Steals lingering like a river smooth
Along its grassy borders.

But as the care-worn cheek grows wan,
And sorrow's shafts fly thicker,
Ye Stars, that measure life to man,
Why seem your courses quicker?

When joys have lost their bloom and breath
And life itself is vapid,
Why, as we reach the Falls of Death,
Feel we its tide more rapid?

It may be strange—yet who would change
Time's course to slower speeding,
When one by one our friends have gone
And left our bosoms bleeding?

Heaven gives our years of fading strength
Indemnifying fleetness;
And those of youth, a seeming length,
Proportion'd to their sweetness.

T. Campbell.

A LESSON

There is a Flower, the lesser Celandine,
That shrinks like many more from cold and rain,
And the first moment that the sun may shine,
Bright as the sun himself, 'tis out again!

When hailstones have been falling, swarm on swarm,
Or blasts the green field and the trees distrest,
Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm
In close self-shelter, like a thing at rest.

But lately, one rough day, this Flower I past,
And recognized it, though an alter'd form,
Now standing forth an offering to the blast,
And buffeted at will by rain and storm.

I stopp'd and said, with inly-mutter'd voice,
'It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold;
This neither is its courage nor its choice,
But its necessity in being old.

'The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the dew;
It cannot help itself in its decay;
Stiff in its members, wither'd, changed of hue,'—
And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was gray.

To be a prodigal's favourite—then, worse truth,
A miser's pensioner—behold our lot!
O Man! that from thy fair and shining youth
Age might but take the things Youth needed not!

W. Wordsworth.

STANZAS

Often rebuked, yet always back returning
To those first feelings that were born with me,
And leaving busy chase of wealth and learning
For idle dreams of things that cannot be:

To-day I will seek not the shadowy region;
Its unsustaining vastness waxes drear;
And visions rising, legion after legion,
Bring the unreal world too strangely near.

I'll walk, but not in old heroic traces,
And not in paths of high morality,
And not among the half-distinguished faces,
The clouded forms of long-past history.

I'll walk where my own nature would be leading:
It vexes me to choose another guide:
Where the grey flocks in ferny glens are feeding;
Where the wild wind blows on the mountain side.

E. Brontë.

WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

I heard a thousand blended notes
While in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What Man has made of Man.

Through primrose tufts, in that sweet bower,
The periwinkle trail'd its wreaths;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopp'd and play'd
Their thoughts I cannot measure,—
But the least motion which they made
It seem'd a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What Man has made of Man?

W. Wordsworth.

A MAN'S A MAN FOR A' THAT

Is THERE for honest Poverty
  That hings his head, an' a' that;
The coward slave—we pass him by,
  We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, an' a' that,
  Our toils obscure an' a' that,
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
  The Man's the gowd for a' that.

What though on hamely fare we dine,
  Wear hoddin grey, an' a' that;

Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A Man's a Man for a' that:
For a' that, an' a' that,
Their tinsel show an' a' that;
The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie ca'd 'a lord,'
Wha struts an' stares, an' a' that;
Tho' hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof for a' that:
For a' that, an' a' that,
His ribband, star, an' a' that;
The man o' independent mind
He looks an' laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, an' a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Gude faith, he mauna fa' that!
For a' that, an' a' that,
Their dignities an' a' that;
The pith o' sense an' pride o' worth,
Are higher rank than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may
(As come it will for a' that),
That Sense and Worth, o'er a' the earth,
Shall bear the gree, an' a' that.
For a' that, an' a' that,
It's coming yet for a' that,
The Man to Man, the world o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.

R. Burns.

TO MARGUERITE

Yes! in the sea of life enisled,
With echoing straits between us thrown,
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
We mortal millions live *alone.*
The islands feel the enclasping flow,
And then their endless bounds they know.

But when the moon their hollows lights,
And they are swept by balms of spring,
And in their glens, on starry nights,
The nightingales divinely sing;
And lovely notes, from shore to shore,
Across the sounds and channels pour—

Oh! then a longing like despair
Is to their farthest caverns sent;
For surely once, they feel, we were
Parts of a single continent!
Now round us spreads the watery plain—
Oh might our marges meet again!

Who order'd, that their longing's fire
Should be, as soon as kindled, cool'd?
Who renders vain their deep desire?—
A God, a God their severance ruled!
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea.

M. Arnold.

WHERE LIES THE LAND?

Where lies the land to which the ship would go?
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.
And where the land she travels from? Away,
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

On sunny noons upon the deck's smooth face,
Linked arm in arm, how pleasant here to pace;
Or, o'er the stern reclining, watch below
The foaming wake far widening as we go.

On stormy nights when wild north-westers rave,
How proud a thing to fight with wind and wave!
The dripping sailor on the reeling mast
Exults to bear, and scorns to wish it past.

Where lies the land to which the ship would go?
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.
And where the land she travels from? Away,
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

A. H. Clough.

SAY NOT THE STRUGGLE NOUGHT AVAILETH

Say not, the struggle nought availeth,
The labour and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent flooding in, the main;

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

A. H. Clough.

ON HIS 75TH BIRTHDAY

I STROVE with none, for none was worth the strife,
Nature I loved, and next to Nature, Art;
I warmed both hands before the fire of life,
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

W. S. Landor.

THANATOPSIS *

To HIM who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language; for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
Into his darker musings, with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness, ere he is aware. When thoughts
Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
Over thy spirit, and sad images
Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,
Make thee to shudder and grow sick at heart;—
Go forth, under the open sky, and list
To Nature's teachings, while from all around—

* Reprinted from Bryant's Complete Poems, by permission of D. Appleton and Company.

Earth and her waters, and the depths of air—
Comes a still voice:—

Yet a few days, and thee
The all-beholding sun shall see no more
In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid with many tears,
Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist
Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim
Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,
And, lost each human trace, surrendering up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix forever with the elements,
To be a brother to the insensible rock
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mould.

Yet not to thine eternal resting place
Shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world—with kings,
The powerful of the earth—the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulcher. The hills
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun,—the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between;
The venerable woods—rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green; and, poured round all,
Old Ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—
Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,
Are shining on the sad abodes of death

Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom.—Take the wings
Of morning, pierce the Barcan wilderness,
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,
Save his own dashings—yet the dead are there;
And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep—the dead reign there alone.
So shalt thou rest, and what if thou withdraw
In silence from the living, and no friend
Take note of thy departure? All that breathe
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care
Plod on, and each one as before will chase
His favorite phantom; yet all these shall leave
Their mirth and their employments, and shall come
And make their bed with thee. As the long train
Of ages glides away, the sons of men—
The youth in life's fresh spring, and he who goes
In the full strength of years, matron and maid,
The speechless babe, and the gray-headed man—
Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,
By those, who in their turn shall follow them.

So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

W. C. Bryant.

UP-HILL

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?
Yes, to the very end.
Will the day's journey take the whole long day?
From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting place?
A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.
May not the darkness hide it from my face?
You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?
Those who have gone before.
Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?
They will not keep you standing at the door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?
Of labor you shall find the sum.
Will there be beds for me and all who seek?
Yes, beds for all who come.

C. G. Rossetti.

PROSPICE

Fear death?—to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go:
For the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall,

Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,
And bade me creep past.
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
Of pain, darkness and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!

R. Browning.

REQUIEM

Under the wide and starry sky,
Dig the grave and let me lie,
Glad have I lived, and gladly die,
And I lay me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

R. L. Stevenson.

POEMS IN SONNET FORM

BY THE SEA

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free;
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
The gentleness of heaven is on the Sea:
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear child! dear girl! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear untouch'd by solemn thought
Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year,
And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

W. Wordsworth.

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER

Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne:
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
—Then felt I like some watcher of the skies

When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

J. Keats.

THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US

The World is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon,
The winds that will be howling at all hours
And are up-gather'd now like sleeping flowers,
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn,—
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathéd horn.

W. Wordsworth.

IF THOU MUST LOVE ME

If thou must love me, let it be for nought
Except for love's sake only. Do not say
'I love her for her smile—her look—her way
Of speaking gently,—for a trick of thought
That falls in well with mine, and certes brought
A sense of pleasant ease on such a day'—
For these things in themselves, Belovèd, may
Be changed, or change for thee,—and love, so wrought,
May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
Thine own sear pity's wiping my tears dry,—

A creature might forget to weep, who bore
Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby!
But love me for love's sake, that evermore
Thou mayst love on, through love's eternity.

E. B. Browning.

HOW DO I LOVE THEE?

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and Ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of everyday's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise;
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith;
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints,—I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

E. B. Browning.

TO ONE WHO HAS BEEN LONG IN CITY PENT

To one who has been long in city pent,
'Tis very sweet to look into the fair
And open face of heaven,—to breathe a prayer
Full in the smile of the blue firmament.
Who is more happy, when, with heart's content,
Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant lair
Of wavy grass, and reads a debonair
And gentle tale of love and languishment?
Returning home at evening, with an ear
Catching the notes of Philomel,—an eye

Watching the sailing cloudlet's bright career,
He mourns that day so soon has glided by:
E'en like the passage of an angel's tear
That falls through the clear ether silently.

J. Keats.

A CONSOLATION

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate;
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possest,
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on Thee—and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remember'd, such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

W. Shakspere.

TO HIS LOVE

When in the chronicle of wasted time
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme
In praise of ladies dead, and lovely knights;
Then in the blazon of sweet beauty's best
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their antique pen would have exprest
Ev'n such a beauty as you master now.
So all their praises are but prophecies
Of this our time, all, you prefiguring;
And for they look'd but with divining eyes,
They had not skill enough your worth to sing:

For we, which now behold these present days,
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

W. Shakspere.

ON HIS BLINDNESS

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide,—
Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?
I fondly ask:—But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies; God doth not need
Either man's work, or His own gifts: who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best: His state
Is kingly; thousands at His bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:—
They also serve who only stand and wait.

J. Milton.

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT

Avenge, O Lord! Thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept Thy truth so pure of old
When all our fathers worshipt stocks and stones,
Forget not: In Thy book record their groans
Who were Thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that roll'd
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To Heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple Tyrant: that from these may grow
A hundred-fold, who, having learnt Thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

J. Milton.

ENGLAND AND SWITZERLAND, 1802

Two Voices are there; one is of the Sea,
One of the Mountains; each a mighty voice:
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, Liberty!
There came a tyrant, and with holy glee
Thou fought'st against him,—but hast vainly striven:
Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
—Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft;
Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left—
For, high-soul'd Maid, what sorrow would it be
That Mountain floods should thunder as before,
And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
And neither awful Voice be heard by Thee!

W. Wordsworth.

BRIGHT STAR! WOULD I WERE STEADFAST AS THOU ART

Bright Star! would I were steadfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night,
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like Nature's patient sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors:—
No—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow'd upon my fair Love's ripening breast
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest;
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever,—or else swoon to death.

J. Keats.

THE TERROR OF DEATH

When I have fears that I may cease to be
Before my pen has glean'd my teeming brain,
Before high-piléd books, in charact'ry
Hold like rich garners the full-ripen'd grain;
When I behold, upon the night's starr'd face,
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,
And think that I may never live to trace
Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance
And when I feel, fair Creature of an hour!
That I shall never look upon thee more,
Never have relish in the faery power
Of unreflecting love—then on the shore
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think
Till Love and Fame to nothingness do sink.

J. Keats.

SLEEP

Come, Sleep: O Sleep! the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
Th' indifferent judge between the high and low;
With shield of proof shield me from out the prease
Of those fierce darts Despair at me doth throw:
O make in me those civil wars to cease;
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so.
Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
A chamber deaf of noise and blind of light,
A rosy garland and a weary head:
And if these things, as being thine in right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

Sir P. Sidney.

TO SLEEP

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by
One after one; the sound of rain, and bees
Murmuring; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky:
I've thought of all by turns, and yet do lie
Sleepless; and soon the small birds' melodies
Must hear, first utter'd from my orchard trees,
And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.
Even thus last night, and two nights more I lay,
And could not win thee, Sleep! by any stealth:
So do not let me wear to-night away:
Without Thee what is all the morning's wealth?
Come, blesséd barrier between day and day
Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health!

W. Wordsworth.

SIBYLLA PALMIFERA

(FOR A PICTURE)

UNDER the arch of Life, where love and death,
Terror and mystery, guard her shrine, I saw
Beauty enthroned; and though her gaze struck awe,
I drew it in as simply as my breath.
Hers are the eyes which, over and beneath,
The sky and sea bend on thee,—which can draw,
By sea or sky or woman, to one law,
The allotted bondman of her palm and wreath.
This is that Lady Beauty, in whose praise
Thy voice and hand shake still,—long known to thee
By flying hair and fluttering hem,—the beat
Following her daily of thy heart and feet,
How passionately and irretrievably,
In what fond flight, how many ways and days!

D. G. Rossetti.

THE INNER VISION

Most sweet it is with unuplifted eyes
To pace the ground, if path be there or none,
While a fair region round the traveller lies
Which he forbears again to look upon;
Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene,
The work of Fancy, or some happy tone
Of meditation, slipping in between
The beauty coming and the beauty gone.
—If Thought and Love desert us, from that day
Let us break off all commerce with the Muse:
With Thought and Love companions of our way—
Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,—
The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her dews
Of inspiration on the humblest lay.

W. Wordsworth.

THE HUMAN SEASONS

Four Seasons fill the measure of the year;
There are four seasons in the mind of man:
He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear
Takes in all beauty with an easy span:
He has his Summer, when luxuriously
Spring's honey'd cud of youthful thought he loves
To ruminate, and by such dreaming high
Is nearest unto heaven: quiet coves
His soul has in its Autumn, when his wings
He furleth close; contented so to look
On mists in idleness—to let fair things
Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook.
He has his Winter too of pale misfeature,
Or else he would forego his mortal nature.

J. Keats.

OZYMANDIAS OF EGYPT

I MET a traveller from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,
Half sunk, a shatter'd visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamp'd on these lifeless things,
The hand that mock'd them and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

P. B. Shelley.

ON THE CASTLE OF CHILLON

ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless Mind!
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,
For there thy habitation is the heart—
The heart which love of Thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd,
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
Chillon! thy prison is a holy place
And thy sad floor an altar, for 'twas trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard! May none those marks efface!
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

Lord Byron.

UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE, SEPT. 3, 1802

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning: silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky,—
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

W. Wordsworth.

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC

Once did She hold the gorgeous East in fee
And was the safeguard of the West; the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
Venice, the eldest child of Liberty.
She was a maiden city, bright and free;
No guile seduced, no force could violate;
And when she took unto herself a mate,
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
And what if she had seen those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay,—
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life hath reach'd its final day:
Men are we, and must grieve when even the shade
Of that which once was great is pass'd away.

W. Wordsworth.

WITHIN KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE

Tax not the royal Saint with vain expense,
With ill-match'd aims the Architect who plann'd
(Albeit labouring for a scanty band
Of white-robed Scholars only) this immense
And glorious work of fine intelligence!
—Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects the lore
Of nicely-calculated less or more:—
So deem'd the man who fashion'd for the sense
These lofty pillars, spread that branching roof
Self-poised, and scoop'd into ten thousand cells
Where light and shade repose, where music dwells
Lingering—and wandering on as loth to die;
Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
That they were born for immortality.

W. Wordsworth.

DESIDERIA

Surprized by joy—impatient as the wind—
I turn'd to share the transport—Oh! with whom
But Thee—deep buried in the silent tomb,
That spot which no vicissitude can find?
Love, faithful love recall'd thee to my mind—
But how could I forget thee? Through what power
Even for the least division of an hour
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind
To my most grievous loss!—That thought's return
Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,
Knowing my heart's best treasure was no more;
That neither present time, nor years unborn
Could to my sight that heavenly face restore.

W. Wordsworth.

LONDON, 1802

O Friend! I know not which way I must look
For comfort, being, as I am, opprest
To think that now our life is only drest
For show; mean handy-work of craftsman, cook,
Or groom!—We must run glittering like a brook
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest;
The wealthiest man among us is the best:
No grandeur now in nature or in book
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry; and these we adore:
Plain living and high thinking are no more:
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household laws.

W. Wordsworth.

THE SAME

Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour:
England has need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men:
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea,
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free;
So didst thou travel on life's common way
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

W. Wordsworth.

WHEN I HAVE BORNE IN MEMORY WHAT HAS TAMED

When I have borne in memory what has tamed
Great Nations; how ennobling thoughts depart
When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
The student's bower for gold,—some fears unnamed
I had, my Country!—am I to be blamed?
Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,
Verily, in the bottom of my heart
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
For dearly must we prize thee; we who find
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men;
And I by my affection was beguiled:
What wonder if a Poet now and then,
Among the many movements of his mind,
Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

W. Wordsworth.

POEMS IN PLAYFUL MOOD

CONSTANCY

Out upon it, I have loved
Three whole days together;
And am like to love three more,
If it prove fair weather.

Time shall moult away his wings,
Ere he shall discover
In the whole wide world again
Such a constant lover.

But the spite on't is, no praise
Is due at all to me:
Love with me had made no stays,
Had it any been but she.

Had it any been but she,
And that very face,
There had been at least ere this
A dozen in her place.

Sir J. Suckling.

THE COURTIN' *

God makes sech nights, all white an' still
Fur 'z you can look or listen,
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill,
All silence an' all glisten.

* By permission of Houghton Mifflin Company.

Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown
An' peeked in thru the winder,
An' there sot Huldy all alone,
'ith no one nigh to hender.

A fireplace filled the room's one side
With half a cord o' wood in—
There warn't no stoves (tell comfort died)
To bake ye to a puddin'.

The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out
Towards the pootiest, bless her,
An' leetle flames danced all about
The chiny on the dresser.

Agin the chimbly crook-necks hung,
An' in amongst 'em rusted
The ole queen's-arm thet gran'ther Young
Fetched back f'om Concord busted.

The very room, coz she was in,
Seemed warm f'om floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
Ez the apples she was peelin'.

'Twas kin' o' kingdom-come to look
On sech a blessed cretur;
A dog-rose blushin' to a brook
Ain't modester nor sweeter.

He was six foot o' man, A 1,
Clear grit an' human natur';
None couldn't quicker pitch a ton
Nor dror a furrer straighter.

He'd sparked it with full twenty gals,
He'd squired 'em, danced 'em, druv 'em,
Fust this one, an' then thet, by spells—
All is, he couldn't love 'em.

But long o' her his veins 'ould run
All crinkly like curled maple;
The side she breshed felt full o' sun
Ez a south slope in Ap'il.

She thought no v'ice hed sech a swing
Ez his'n in the choir;
My! when he made Ole Hunderd ring
She *knowed* the Lord was nigher.

An' she'd blush scarlit, right in prayer,
When her new meetin'-bunnet
Felt somehow thru its crown a pair
O' blue eyes sot upun it.

Thet night, I tell ye, she looked *some!*
She seemed to 've gut a new soul,
For she felt sartin-sure he'd come,
Down to her very shoe-sole.

She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,
A-raspin' on the scraper,—
All ways to once her feelin's flew
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,
Some doubtfle o' the sekle;
His heart kep' goin' pity-pat,
But her'n went pity Zekle.

An' yit she gin her cheer a jerk
  Ez though she wished him furder,
An' on her apples kep' to work,
  Parin' away like murder.

"You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?"
  "Wall . . . no . . . I come dasignin'"—
"To see my Ma? She's sprinklin' clo'es
  Agin to-morrer's i'nin'."

To say why gals act so or so,
  Or don't, 'ould be presumin';
Mebby to mean *yes* an' say *no*
  Comes nateral to women.

He stood a spell on one foot fust,
  Then stood a spell on t'other,
An' on which one he felt the wust
  He couldn't ha' told ye nuther.

Says he, "I'd better call agin;"
  Says she, "Think likely, Mister;"
Thet last word pricked him like a pin,
  An' . . . Wal, he up an' kist her.

When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,
  Huldy sot pale ez ashes,
All kin' o' smily roun' the lips
  An' teary roun' the lashes.

For she was jes' the quiet kind
  Whose naturs never vary,
Like streams that keep a summer mind
  Snowhid in Jenooary.

The blood clost roun' her heart felt glued
  Too tight for all expressin',
Tell mother see how matters stood,
  An' gin 'em both her blessin'.

Then her red come back like the tide
  Down to the bay o' Fundy,
An' all I know is they was cried
  In meetin' come nex' Sunday.

J. R. Lowell.

THE LAST LEAF *

I saw him once before,
As he passed by the door,
  And again
The pavement stones resound,
As he totters o'er the ground
  With his cane.

They say that in his prime,
Ere the pruning-knife of Time
  Cut him down,
Not a better man was found
By the Crier on his round
  Through the town.

But now he walks the streets,
And he looks at all he meets
  Sad and wan,
And he shakes his feeble head,
That it seems as if he said,
  "They are gone."

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The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has prest
In their bloom,
And the names he loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb.

My grandmamma has said—
Poor old lady, she is dead
Long ago—
That he had a Roman nose,
And his cheek was like a rose
In the snow;

But now his nose is thin,
And it rests upon his chin
Like a staff,
And a crook is in his back,
And a melancholy crack
In his laugh

I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
At him here;
But his old three-cornered hat,
And the breeches, and all that,
Are so queer!

And if I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree
In the spring,
Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old forsaken bough
Where I cling.

O. W. Holmes.

A LETTER OF ADVICE

FROM MISS MEDORA TREVILIAN, AT PADUA, TO MISS ARAMINTA VAVASOUR, IN LONDON

You tell me you're promised a lover,
My own Araminta, next week;
Why cannot my fancy discover
The hue of his coat and his cheek?
Alas! if he look like another,
A vicar, a banker, a beau,
Be deaf to your father and mother,
My own Araminta, say 'No!'

Miss Lane, at her Temple of Fashion,
Taught us both how to sing and to speak,
And we loved one another with passion,
Before we had been there a week:
You gave me a ring for a token;
I wear it wherever I go;
I gave you a chain,—is it broken?
My own Araminta, say 'No!'

O think of our favourite cottage,
And think of our dear Lalla Rookh!
How we shared with the milkmaids their pottage,
And drank of the stream from the brook;
How fondly our loving lips faltered,
'What further can grandeur bestow?'
My heart is the same;—is yours altered?
My own Araminta, say 'No!'

Remember the thrilling romances
We read on the bank in the glen;
Remember the suitors our fancies
Would picture for both of us then.

They wore the red cross on their shoulder,
  They had vanquished and pardoned their foe—
Sweet friend, are you wiser or colder?
  My own Araminta, say 'No!'

You know, when Lord Rigmarole's carriage,
  Drove off with your cousin Justine,
You wept, dearest girl, at the marriage,
  And whispered 'How base she has been!'
You said you were sure it would kill you,
  If ever your husband looked so;
And you will not apostatize,—will you?
  My own Araminta, say 'No!'

When I heard I was going abroad, love,
  I thought I was going to die;
We walked arm in arm to the road, love,
  We looked arm in arm to the sky;
And I said 'When a foreign postilion
  Has hurried me off to the Po,
Forget not Medora Trevilian:
  My own Araminta, say "No"!'

We parted! but sympathy's fetters
  Reach far over valley and hill;
I muse o'er you exquisite letters,
  And feel that your heart is mine still;
And he who would share it with me, love,—
  The richest of treasures below,—
If he's not what Orlando should be, love,
  My own Araminta, say 'No!'

If he wears a top-boot in his wooing,
  If he comes to you riding a cob,
If he talks of his baking or brewing,
  If he puts up his feet on the hob,

If he ever drinks port after dinner,
If his brow or his breeding is low,
If he calls himself 'Thompson' or 'Skinner,'
My own Araminta, say 'No!'

If he studies the news in the papers
While you are preparing the tea,
If he talks of the damps or the vapours
While moonlight lies soft on the sea,
If he's sleepy while you are capricious,
If he has not a musical 'Oh!'
If he does not call Werther delicious,—
My own Araminta, say 'No!'

If he ever sets foot in the city
Among the stockbrokers and Jews,
If he has not a heart full of pity,
If he don't stand six feet in his shoes,
If his lips are not redder than roses,
If his hands are not whiter than snow,
If he has not the model of noses,—
My own Araminta, say 'No!'

If he speaks of a tax or a duty,
If he does not look grand on his knees,
If he's blind to a landscape of beauty,
Hills, valleys, rocks, waters, and trees,
If he dotes not on desolate towers,
If he likes not to hear the blast blow,
If he knows not the language of flowers,—
My own Araminta, say 'No!'

He must walk—like a god of old story
Come down from the home of his rest;
He must smile—like the sun in his glory
On the buds he loves ever the best;

And oh! from its ivory portal
Like music his soft speech must flow!—
If he speak, smile, or walk like a mortal,
My own Araminta, say 'No!'

Don't listen to tales of his bounty,
Don't hear what they say of his birth,
Don't look at his seat in the county,
Don't calculate what he is worth;
But give him a theme to write verse on,
And see if he turns out his toe;
If he's only an excellent person,—
My own Araminta, say 'No!'

W. M. Praed.

ENCOURAGEMENTS TO A LOVER

Why so pale and wan, fond lover?
Prythee, why so pale?
Will, if looking well can't move her,
Looking ill prevail?
Prythee, why so pale?

Why so dull and mute, young sinner?
Prythee, why so mute?
Will, when speaking well can't win her,
Saying nothing do't?
Prythee, why so mute?

Quit, quit, for shame! this will not move,
This cannot take her;
If of herself she will not love,
Nothing can make her:
The D—l take her!

Sir J. Suckling.

COMPANIONS

I KNOW not of what we pondered
  Or made pretty pretence to talk,
As, her hand within mine, we wandered
  Toward the pool by the lime tree walk,
While the dew fell in showers from the passion
    flowers
  And the blush-rose bent on her stalk.

I cannot recall her figure:
  Was it regal as Juno's own?
Or only a trifle bigger
  Than the elves who surrounded the throne
Of the Faery Queen, and are seen, I ween,
  By mortals in dreams alone?

What her eyes were like, I know not:
  Perhaps they were blurred with tears;
And perhaps in your skies there glow not
  (On the contrary) clearer spheres.
No! as to her eyes, I am just as wise
  As you or the cat, my dears.

Her teeth, I presume, were "pearly":
  But which was she, brunette or blonde?
Her hair, was it quaintly curly,
  Or as straight as a beadle's wand?
That I failed to remark;—it was rather dark
  And shadowy round the pond.

Then the hand that reposed so snugly
  In mine—was it plump or spare?
Was the countenance fair or ugly?
  Nay, children, you have me there!
My eyes were p'raps blurred; and besides I'd heard
  That it's horribly rude to stare.

And I—was I brusque and surly?
  Or oppressively bland and fond?
Was I partial to rising early?
  Or why did we twain abscond,
All breakfastless too, from the public view
  To prowl by a misty pond?

What passed, what was felt or spoken—
  Whether anything passed at all—
And whether the heart was broken
  That beat under that shelt'ring shawl—
(If shawl she had on, which I doubt)—has gone,
  Yes, gone from me past recall.

Was I haply the lady's suitor?
  Or her uncle? I can't make out—
Ask your governess, dears, or tutor.
  For myself, I'm in helpless doubt
As to why we were there, who on earth we were,
  And what this is all about.

C. S. Calverley.

MY MISTRESS'S BOOTS

She has dancing eyes and ruby lips,
Delightful boots—and away she skips.

They nearly strike me dumb,—
I tremble when they come
  Pit-a-pat:
This palpitation means
These boots are Geraldine's—
  Think of that!

O, where did hunter win
So delicate a skin
  For her feet?

You lucky little kid,
You perished, so you did,
For my Sweet.

The faery stitching gleams
On the sides, and in the seams,
And reveals
That the Pixies were the wags
Who tipt these funny tags,
And these heels.

What soles to charm an elf!—
Had Crusoe, sick of self,
Chanced to view
One printed near the tide,
O, how hard he would have tried
For the two!

For Gerry's debonair,
And innocent and fair
As a rose;
She's an Angel in a frock,—
She's an Angel with a clock
To her hose!

The simpletons who squeeze
Their pretty toes to please
Mandarins,
Would positively flinch
From venturing to pinch
Geraldine's.

Cinderella's *lefts and rights*
To Geraldine's were frights:
And I trow

The damsel, deftly shod,
Has dutifully trod
Until now.

Come, Gerry, since it suits
Such a pretty Puss (in Boots)
These to don,
Set your dainty hand awhile
On my shoulders, Dear, and I'll
Put them on.

F. Locker.

THE CANE-BOTTOMED CHAIR

In tattered old slippers that toast at the bars,
And a ragged old jacket perfumed with cigars,
Away from the world and its toils and its cares,
I've a snug little kingdom up four pair of stairs.

To mount to this realm is a care, to be sure,
But the fire there is bright, and the air rather pure;
And the view I behold on a sunshiny day
Is grand through the chimney-pots over the way.

This snug little chamber is crammed in all nooks
With worthless old knicknacks and silly old books,
And foolish old odds and foolish old ends,
Cracked bargains from brokers, cheap keepsakes from friends.

Old armour, prints, pictures, pipes, china (all cracked),
Old rickety tables and chairs broken-backed;
A twopenny treasury wondrous to see;
What matter? 'tis pleasant to you, friend, and me.

No better divan need the Sultan require,
Than the creaking old sofa that basks by the fire;
And 'tis wonderful, surely, what music you get
From the rickety, ramshackle, wheezy spinet.

That praying-rug came from a Turkoman's camp;
By Tiber once twinkled that brazen old lamp;
A Mameluke fierce yonder dagger has drawn:
'Tis a murderous knife to toast muffins upon.

Long long through the hours, and the night, and the chimes,
Here we talk of old books, and old friends, and old times;
As we sit in a fog made of rich Latakie
This chamber is pleasant to you, friend, and me.

But of all the cheap treasures that garnish my nest,
There's one that I love and I cherish the best:
For the finest of couches that's padded with hair
I never would change thee, my cane-bottomed chair.

'Tis a bandy-legg'd, high-shouldered, worm-eaten seat,
With a creaking old back, and twisted old feet;
But since the fair morning when Fanny sat there,
I bless thee and love thee, old cane-bottomed chair.

If chairs have but feeling, in holding such charms,
A thrill must have passed through your withered old arms!
I looked, and I longed, and I wished in despair;
I wished myself turned to a cane-bottomed chair.

It was but a moment she sat in this place,
She'd a scarf on her neck, and a smile on her face!
A smile on her face, and a rose in her hair,
And she sat there, and bloomed in my cane-bottomed chair.

When the candles burn low, and the company's gone,
In the silence of night as I sit here alone—
I sit here alone, but we yet are a pair—
My Fanny I see in my cane-bottomed chair.

She comes from the past and revisits my room;
She looks as she did then, all beauty and bloom;
So smiling and tender, so fresh and so fair,
And yonder she sits in my cane-bottomed chair.

W. M. Thackeray.

CONTENTMENT *

Little I ask; my wants are few;
I only wish a hut of stone,
(A *very plain* brown stone will do,)
That I may call my own;—
And close at hand is such a one,
In yonder street that fronts the sun.

Plain food is quite enough for me;
Three courses are as good as ten;—
If Nature can subsist on three,
Thank Heaven for three. Amen!
I always thought cold victual nice;—
My *choice* would be vanilla-ice.

I care not much for gold or land;—
Give me a mortgage here and there,—
Some good bank-stock, some note of hand,
Or trifling railroad share,—
I only ask that Fortune send
A *little* more than I shall spend.

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Honors are silly toys, I know,
And titles are but empty names;
I would, *perhaps*, be Plenipo,—
But only near St. James;
I'm very sure I should not care
To fill our Gubernator's chair.

Jewels are baubles; 'tis a sin
To care for such unfruitful things;—
One good-sized diamond in a pin,—
Some, *not so large*, in rings,—
A ruby, and a pearl, or so,
Will do for me;—I laugh at show.

My dame should dress in cheap attire;
(Good, heavy silks are never dear;)—
I own perhaps I *might* desire
Some shawls of true Cashmere,—
Some marrowy crapes of China silk,
Like wrinkled skins on scalded milk.

I would not have the horse I drive
So fast that folks must stop and stare;
An easy gait—two forty-five—
Suits me; I do not care;—
Perhaps, for just a *single spurt,*
Some seconds less would do no hurt.

Of pictures, I should like to own
Titians and Raphaels three or four,—
I love so much their style and tone,—
One Turner, and no more,
(A landscape,—foreground golden dirt,—
The sunshine painted with a squirt.)

Of books but few,—some fifty score
For daily use, and bound for wear;

The rest upon an upper floor;—
  Some *little* luxury *there*
Of red morocco's gilded gleam
And vellum rich as country cream.

Busts, cameos, gems,—such things as these,
  Which others often show for pride,
I value for their power to please,
  And selfish churls deride;—
One Stradivarius, I confess,
Two Meerschaums, I would fain possess.

Wealth's wasteful tricks I will not learn,
  Nor ape the glittering upstart fool;—
Shall not carved tables serve my turn,
  But *all* must be of buhl?
Give grasping pomp its double share,—
I ask but *one* recumbent chair.

Thus humble let me live and die,
  Nor long for Midas' golden touch;
If Heaven more generous gifts deny,
  I shall not miss them *much*,—
Too grateful for the blessing lent
Of simple tastes and mind content!

O. W. Holmes.

PROSE AND RHYME

When the roads are heavy with mire and rut,
  In November fogs, in December snows,
When the North Wind howls, and the doors are shut,
  There is place and enough for the pains of prose;—
  But whenever a scent from the whitethorn blows,
And the jasmine-stars to the casement climb,
  And a Rosalind-face at the lattice shows,
Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

When the brain gets dry as an empty nut,
    When the reason stands on its squarest toes,
When the mind (like a beard) has a "formal cut,"
    There is place and enough for the pains of prose;—
    But whenever the May-blood stirs and glows,
And the young year draws to a "golden prime,"—
    And Sir Romeo sticks in his ear a rose,
Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

In a theme where the thoughts have a pedant strut
    In a changing quarrel of "Ayes" and "Noes,"
In a starched procession of "If" and "But,"
    There is place and enough for the pains of prose;—
    But whenever a soft glance softer grows,
And the light hours dance to the trysting-time,
    And the secret is told "that no one knows,"
Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

ENVOY

In the work-a-day world,—for its needs and woes,
There is place and enough for the pains of prose;
But whenever the May-bells clash and chime,
Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

A. Dobson.

WITH STRAWBERRIES

WITH strawberries we filled a tray,
And then we drove away, away
    Along the links beside the sea,
    Where wave and wind were light and free,
And August felt as fresh as May.

And where the springy turf was gay
With thyme and balm and many a spray
Of wild roses, you tempted me
With strawberries!

A shadowy sail, silent and grey,
Stole like a ghost across the bay;
But none could hear me ask my fee,
And none could know what came to be.
Can sweethearts *all* their thirst allay
With strawberries?

W. E. Henley.

JENNY KISSED ME

Jenny kissed me when we met,
Jumping from the chair she sat in;
Time, you thief, who love to get
Sweets into your list, put that in:
Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,
Say that health and wealth have missed me,
Say I'm growing old, but add,
Jenny kissed me.

L. Hunt.

POEMS IN A MINOR KEY

THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES

I HAVE had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school-days;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I loved a Love once, fairest among women:
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man:
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly;
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like I paced round the haunts of my childhood,
Earth seem'd a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother,
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces,

How some they have died, and some they have left me,
And some are taken from me; all are departed;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

C. Lamb.

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

A. Tennyson.

THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS

Oft in the stilly night
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Fond Memory brings the light
Of other days around me:
The smiles, the tears
Of boyhood's years,
The words of love then spoken;
The eyes that shone,
Now dimm'd and gone,
The cheerful hearts now broken!

Thus in the stilly night
  Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
  Of other days around me.

When I remember all
  The friends so link'd together
I've seen around me fall
  Like leaves in wintry weather,
    I feel like one
    Who treads alone
  Some banquet-hall deserted,
    Whose lights are fled
    Whose garlands dead,
  And all but he departed!
Thus in the stilly night
  Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
  Of other days around me.

T. Moore.

PAST AND PRESENT

I REMEMBER, I remember
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn;
He never came a wink too soon
Nor brought too long a day;
But now, I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away.

I remember, I remember
The roses, red and white,
The violets, and the lily-cups—
Those flowers made of light!

The lilacs where the robin built,
And where my brother set
The laburnum on his birth-day,—
The tree is living yet!

I remember, I remember
Where I was used to swing,
And thought the air must rush as fresh
To swallows on the wing;
My spirit flew in feathers then
That is so heavy now,
And summer pools could hardly cool
The fever on my brow.

I remember, I remember
The fir trees dark and high;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky:
It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm farther off from Heaven
Than when I was a boy.

T. Hood.

THE FLIGHT OF LOVE

When the lamp is shattered
The light in the dust lies dead.—
When the cloud is scattered,
The rainbow's glory is shed.
When the lute is broken,
Sweet tones are remembered not;
When the lips have spoken,
Loved accents are soon forgot.

As music and splendour
Survive not the lamp and the lute,
The heart's echoes render
No song when the spirit is mute—
No song but sad dirges,
Like the wind through a ruined cell,
Or the mournful surges
That ring the dead seaman's knell.

When hearts have once mingled,
Love first leaves the well-built nest;
The weak one is singled
To endure what it once possessed.
O Love, who bewailest
The frailty of all things here,
Why choose you the frailest
For your cradle, your home, and your bier?

Its passions will rock thee
As the storms rock the ravens on high;
Bright reason will mock thee
Like the sun from a wintry sky.
From thy nest every rafter
Will rot, and thine eagle home
Leave thee naked to laughter,
When leaves fall and cold winds come.

P. B. Shelley.

THE JOURNEY ONWARDS

As slow our ship her foamy track
Against the wind was cleaving,
Her trembling pennant still look'd back
To that dear isle 'twas leaving.
So loth we part from all we love,
From all the links that bind us;

So turn our hearts, as on we rove,
To those we've left behind us!

When, round the bowl, of vanish'd years
We talk with joyous seeming—
With smiles that might as well be tears,
So faint, so sad their beaming;
While memory brings us back again
Each early tie that twined us,
Oh, sweet's the cup that circles then
To those we've left behind us!

And when, in other climes, we meet
Some isle or vale enchanting,
Where all looks flowery, wild, and sweet,
And nought but love is wanting;
We think how great had been our bliss
If Heaven had but assign'd us
To live and die in scenes like this,
With some we've left behind us!

As travellers oft look back at eve
When eastward darkly going,
To gaze upon that light they leave
Still faint behind them glowing,—
So, when the close of pleasure's day
To gloom hath near consign'd us,
We turn to catch one fading ray
Of joy that's left behind us.

T. Moore.

YOUTH AND AGE

There's not a joy the world can give like that it takes away
When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull decay;

'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone, which fades
so fast,
But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself be
past.

Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of happiness
Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt, or ocean of excess:
The magnet of their course is gone, or only points in vain
The shore to which their shiver'd sail shall never stretch
again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death itself comes
down;
It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not dream its own;
That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of our tears,
And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis where the ice
appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth distract
the breast,
Through midnight hours that yield no more their former
hope of rest;
'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd turret wreathe,
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and gray
beneath.

Oh could I feel as I have felt, or be what I have been,
Or weep as I could once have wept o'er many a vanish'd
scene,—
As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish though
they be,
So midst the wither'd waste of life, those tears would flow
to me!

Lord Byron.

YOUTH AND AGE

Verse, a breeze 'mid blossoms straying,
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—
Both were mine! Life went a-maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
When I was young!
When I was young?—Ah, woful When!
Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then!
This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands
How lightly then it flash'd along:
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide!
Nought cared this body for wind or weather
When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;
Friendship is a sheltering tree;
O! the joys that came down shower-like,
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
Ere I was old!
Ere I was old? Ah woeful Ere,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!
O Youth! for years so many and sweet,
'Tis known that Thou and I were one,
I'll think it but a fond conceit—
It cannot be, that Thou art gone!
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet toll'd:—
And thou were aye a masker bold!
What strange disguise hast now put on
To make believe that Thou art gone?
I see these locks in silvery slips,

This drooping gait, this alter'd size:
But Springtide blossoms on thy lips,
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!
Life is but Thought: so think I will
That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve!
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve
When we are old:
—That only serves to make us grieve
With oft and tedious taking-leave,
Like some poor nigh-related guest
That may not rudely be dismist,
Yet hath out-stay'd his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.

S. T. Coleridge.

THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN

At the corner of Wood Street, when daylight appears,
Hangs a Thrush that sings loud, it has sung for three years:
Poor Susan has pass'd by the spot, and has heard
In the silence of morning the song of the bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment; what ails her? She sees
A mountain ascending, a vision of trees;
Bright volumes of vapour through Lothbury glide,
And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale
Down which she so often has tripp'd with her pail;
And a single small cottage, a nest like a dove's,
The one only dwelling on earth that she loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven: but they fade,
The mist and the river, the hill and the shade;
The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise,
And the colours have all pass'd away from her eyes!

W. Wordsworth.

SIMON LEE THE OLD HUNTSMAN

In the sweet shire of Cardigan,
Not far from pleasant Ivor Hall,
An old man dwells, a little man,—
'Tis said he once was tall.
Full five-and-thirty years he lived
A running huntsman merry;
And still the centre of his cheek
Is red as a ripe cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,
And hill and valley rang with glee,
When Echo bandied, round and round,
The halloo of Simon Lee.
In those proud days he little cared
For husbandry or tillage;
To blither tasks did Simon rouse
The sleepers of the village.

He all the country could outrun,
Could leave both man and horse behind;
And often, ere the chase was done,
He reel'd and was stone-blind.
And still there's something in the world
At which his heart rejoices;
For when the chiming hounds are out,
He dearly loves their voices.

But oh the heavy change!—bereft
Of health, strength, friends and kindred, see!
Old Simon to the world is left
In liveried poverty:—
His master's dead, and no one now
Dwells in the Hall of Ivor;
Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead;
He is the sole survivor.

And he is lean and he is sick,
His body, dwindled and awry,
Rests upon ankles swoln and thick;
His legs are thin and dry.
One prop he has, and only one,—
His wife, an aged woman,
Lives with him, near the waterfall,
Upon the village common.

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,
Not twenty paces from the door,
A scrap of land they have, but they
Are poorest of the poor.
This scrap of land he from the heath
Enclosed when he was stronger;
But what to them avails the land
Which he can till no longer?

Oft, working by her husband's side,
Ruth does what Simon cannot do;
For she, with scanty cause for pride,
Is stouter of the two.
And, though you with your utmost skill
From labour could not wean them,
'Tis little, very little, all
That they can do between them.

Few months of life has he in store
As he to you will tell,
For still, the more he works, the more
Do his weak ankles swell.
My gentle Reader, I perceive
How patiently you've waited,
And now I fear that you expect
Some tale will be related.

O Reader! had you in your mind
Such stores as silent thought can bring,
O gentle Reader! you would find
A tale in everything.
What more I have to say is short,
And you must kindly take it:
It is no tale; but, should you think,
Perhaps a tale you'll make it.

One summer-day I chanced to see
This old Man doing all he could
To unearth the root of an old tree,
A stump of rotten wood.
The mattock totter'd in his hand;
So vain was his endeavour
That at the root of the old tree
He might have work'd forever.

'You're overtask'd, good Simon Lee,
Give me your tool,' to him I said;
And at the word right gladly he
Received my proffer'd aid.
I struck, and with a single blow
The tangled root I sever'd,
At which the poor old man so long
And vainly had endeavour'd.

The tears into his eyes were brought,
And thanks and praises seem'd to run
So fast out of his heart, I thought
They never would have dône.
—I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deed
With coldness still returning;
Alas! the gratitude of men
Hath oftener left me mourning.

W. Wordsworth.

STANZAS WRITTEN IN DEJECTION NEAR NAPLES

The sun is warm, the sky is clear,
The waves are dancing fast and bright,
Blue isles and snowy mountains wear
The purple noon's transparent might:
The breath of the moist earth is light
Around its unexpanded buds;
Like many a voice of one delight—
The winds', the birds', the ocean-floods'—
The city's voice itself is soft like Solitude's.

I see the deep's untrampled floor
With green and purple sea-weeds strown;
I see the waves upon the shore
Like light dissolved in star-showers thrown:
I sit upon the sands alone;
The lightning of the noon-tide ocean
Is flashing round me, and a tone
Arises from its measured motion—
How sweet! did any heart now share in my emotion.

Alas! I have nor hope nor health,
Nor peace within nor calm around,
Nor that content, surpassing wealth,
The sage in meditation found,

And walk'd with inward glory crown'd—
Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leisure;
Others I see whom these surround—
Smiling they live, and call life pleasure;
To me that cup has been dealt in another measure.

Yet now despair itself is mild
Even as the winds and waters are;
I could lie down like a tired child,
And weep away the life of care
Which I have borne, and yet must bear,—
Till death like sleep might steal on me,
And I might feel in the warm air
My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.

P. B. Shelley.

A DREAM OF THE UNKNOWN

I DREAM'D that as I wander'd by the way
Bare Winter suddenly was changed to Spring,
And gentle odours led my steps astray,
Mix'd with a sound of waters murmuring
Along a shelving bank of turf, which lay
Under a copse, and hardly dared to fling
Its green arms round the bosom of the stream,
But kiss'd it and then fled, as Thou mightest in dream.

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets,
Daisies, those pearl'd Arcturi of the earth,
The constellated flower that never sets;
Faint oxlips; tender blue-bells, at whose birth
The sod scarce heaved; and that tall flower that wets
Its mother's face with heaven-collected tears,
When the low wind, its playmate's voice, it hears.

And in the warm hedge grew lush eglantine,
  Green cow-bind and the moonlight-colour'd May,
And cherry-blossoms, and white cups, whose wine
  Was the bright dew yet drain'd not by the day;
And wild roses, and ivy serpentine
  With its dark buds and leaves, wandering astray;
And flowers azure, black, and streak'd with gold,
Fairer than any waken'd eyes behold.

And nearer to the river's trembling edge
  There grew broad flag-flowers, purple prank'd with white,
And starry river-buds among the sedge,
  And floating water-lilies, broad and bright,
Which lit the oak that overhung the hedge
  With moonlight beams of their own watery light;
And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep green
As soothed the dazzled eye with sober sheen.

Methought that of these visionary flowers
  I made a nosegay, bound in such a way
That the same hues, which in their natural bowers
  Were mingled or opposed, the like array
Kept these imprison'd children of the Hours
  Within my hand,—and then, elate and gay,
I hasten'd to the spot whence I had come
That I might there present it—O! to Whom?

P. B. Shelley.

HAPPY INSENSIBILITY

In a drear-nighted December,
Too happy, happy tree,
Thy branches ne'er remember
Their green felicity:

The north cannot undo them
With a sleety whistle through them,
Nor frozen thawings glue them
From budding at the prime.

In a drear-nighted December,
Too happy, happy brook,
Thy bubblings ne'er remember
Apollo's summer look;
But with a sweet forgetting
They stay their crystal fretting,
Never, never petting
About the frozen time.

Ah! would 'twere so with many
A gentle girl and boy!
But were there ever any
Writhed not at passéd joy?
To know the change and feel it,
When there is none to heal it
Nor numbéd sense to steal it—
Was never said in rhyme.

J. Keats.

DATUR HORA QUIETI

The sun upon the lake is low,
The wild birds hush their song,
The hills have evening's deepest glow,
Yet Leonard tarries long.
Now all whom varied toil and care
From home and love divide,
In the calm sunset may repair
Each to the loved one's side.

The noble dame, on turret high,
  Who waits her gallant knight,
Looks to the western beam to spy
  The flash of armour bright.
The village maid, with hand on brow
  The level ray to shade,
Upon the footpath watches now
  For Colin's darkening plaid.

Now to their mates the wild swans row,
  By day they swam apart,
And to the thicket wanders slow
  The hind beside the hart.
The woodlark at his partner's side
  Twitters his closing song—
All meet whom day and care divide,
  But Leonard tarries long!

Sir W. Scott.

THE SOLDIER'S DREAM

Our bugles sang truce, for the night-cloud had lower'd,
  And the sentinel stars set their watch in the sky;
And thousands had sunk on the ground overpower'd,
  The weary to sleep, and the wounded to die.

When reposing that night on my pallet of straw
  By the wolf-scaring faggot that guarded the slain,
At the dead of the night a sweet Vision I saw;
  And thrice ere the morning I dreamt it again.

Methought from the battle-field's dreadful array
  Far, far, I had roam'd on a desolate track:
'Twas Autumn,—and sunshine arose on the way
  To the home of my fathers, that welcomed me back.

I flew to the pleasant fields traversed so oft
In life's morning march, when my bosom was young;
I heard my own mountain-goats bleating aloft,
And knew the sweet strain that the corn-reapers sung.

Then pledged we the wine-cup, and fondly I swore
From my home and my weeping friends never to part;
My little ones kiss'd me a thousand times o'er,
And my wife sobb'd aloud in her fulness of heart.

'Stay—stay with us!—rest! thou art weary and worn!'—
And fain was their war-broken soldier to stay;—
But sorrow return'd with the dawning of morn,
And the voice in my dreaming ear melted away.

T. Campbell.

A DIRGE

Rough wind, that moanest loud
Grief too sad for song;
Wild wind, when sullen cloud
Knells all the night long;
Sad storm whose tears are vain,
Bare woods whose branches stain,
Deep caves and dreary main,—
Wail for the world's wrong!

P. B. Shelley.

THRENOS

O World! O Life! O Time!
On whose last steps I climb,
Trembling at that where I had stood before;
When will return the glory of your prime?
No more—Oh, never more!

Out of the day and night
A joy has taken flight:
Fresh spring, and summer, and winter hoar
Move my faint heart with grief, but with delight
No more—Oh, never more!

P. B. Shelley.

MUSIC, WHEN SOFT VOICES DIE

Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory—
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heap'd for the belovéd's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when Thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

P. B. Shelley.

POEMS ON THE IMAGINATION

THE REALM OF FANCY

Ever let the Fancy roam;
Pleasure never is at home:
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth;
Then let wingéd Fancy wander
Through the thought still spread beyond her:
Open wide the mind's cage-door,
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.
O sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,
And the enjoying of the Spring
Fades as does its blossoming;
Autumn's red-lipp'd fruitage too,
Blushing through the mist and dew,
Cloys with tasting: What do then?
Sit thee by the ingle, when
The sear faggot blazes bright,
Spirit of a winter's night;
When the soundless earth is muffled,
And the cakéd snow is shuffled
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon;
When the Night doth meet the Noon
In a dark conspiracy
To banish Even from her sky.
Sit thee there, and send abroad,
With a mind self-overaw'd,
Fancy, high-commission'd:—send her!
She has vassals to attend her:

She will bring, in spite of frost,
Beauties that the earth hath lost;
She will bring thee, all together,
All delights of summer weather;
All the buds and bells of May
From dewy sward or thorny spray;
All the heapéd Autumn's wealth,
With a still, mysterious stealth:
She will mix these pleasures up
Like three fit wines in a cup,
And thou shalt quaff it:—thou shalt hear
Distant harvest-carols clear;
Rustle of the reapéd corn;
Sweet birds antheming the morn:
And, in the same moment—hark!
'Tis the early April lark,
Or the rooks, with busy caw,
Foraging for sticks and straw.
Thou shalt, at one glance, behold
The daisy and the marigold;
White-plumed lilies, and the first
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst;
Shaded hyacinth, alway
Sapphire queen of the mid-May;
And every leaf, and every flower
Pearléd with the self-same shower.
Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep
Meagre from its celléd sleep;
And the snake all winter-thin
Cast on sunny bank its skin;
Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see
Hatching in the hawthorn-tree,
When the hen-bird's wing doth rest
Quiet on her mossy nest;
Then the hurry and alarm
When the bee-hive casts its swarm;

Acorns ripe down-pattering,
While the autumn breezes sing.

Oh, sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Everything is spoilt by use:
Where's the cheek that doth not fade,
Too much gazed at? Where's the maid
Whose lip mature is ever new?
Where's the eye, however blue,
Doth not weary? Where's the face
One would meet in every place?
Where's the voice, however soft,
One would hear so very oft?
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth.
Let then wingéd Fancy find
Thee a mistress to thy mind:
Dulcet-eyed as Ceres' daughter,
Ere the God of Torment taught her
How to frown and how to chide;
With a waist and with a side
White as Hebe's, when her zone
Slipt its golden clasp, and down
Fell her kirtle to her feet,
While she held the goblet sweet,
And Jove grew languid.—Break the mesh
Of the Fancy's silken leash;
Quickly break her prison-string,
And such joys as these she'll bring.
—Let the wingéd Fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home.

J. Keats.

KUBLA KHAN

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
  Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills
Where blossom'd many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil
    seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced:
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reach'd the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;

Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!
A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she play'd,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drank the milk of Paradise.

S. T. Coleridge.

THE POET'S DREAM

On a Poet's lips I slept
Dreaming like a love-adept
In the sound his breathing kept;
Nor seeks nor finds he mortal blisses,
But feeds on the aërial kisses
Of shapes that haunt Thought's wildernesses.
He will watch from dawn to gloom
The lake-reflected sun illume
The yellow bees in the ivy-bloom,
Nor heed nor see what things they be—

But from these create he can
Forms more real than living Man,
Nurslings of Immortality!

P. B. Shelley.

THE MERMAID TAVERN

Souls of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?
Have ye tippled drink more fine
Than mine host's Canary wine?
Or are fruits of Paradise
Sweeter than those dainty pies
Of venison? O generous food!
Drest as though bold Robin Hood
Would, with his Maid Marian,
Sup and bowse from horn and can.

I have heard that on a day
Mine host's sign-board flew away
Nobody knew whither, till
An astrologer's old quill
To a sheepskin gave the story,
Said he saw you in your glory,
Underneath a new-old sign
Sipping beverage divine,
And pledging with contented smack
The Mermaid in the Zodiac.

Souls of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?

J. Keats.

TO A LADY, WITH A GUITAR

Ariel to Miranda:—Take
This slave of music, for the sake
Of him, who is the slave of thee;
And teach it all the harmony
In which thou canst, and only thou,
Make the delighted spirit glow,
Till joy denies itself again
And, too intense, is turn'd to pain.
For by permission and command
Of thine own Prince Ferdinand,
Poor Ariel sends this silent token
Of more than ever can be spoken;
Your guardian spirit, Ariel, who
From life to life must still pursue
Your happiness, for thus alone
Can Ariel ever find his own.
From Prospero's enchanted cell,
As the mighty verses tell,
To the throne of Naples he
Lit you o'er the trackless sea,
Flitting on, your prow before,
Like a living meteor.
When you die, the silent Moon
In her interlunar swoon
Is not sadder in her cell
Than deserted Ariel:—
When you live again on earth,
Like an unseen Star of birth
Ariel guides you o'er the sea
Of life from your nativity:—
Many changes have been run
Since Ferdinand and you begun
Your course of love, and Ariel still
Has track'd your steps and served your will.

Now in humbler, happier lot,
This is all remember'd not;
And now, alas! the poor Sprite is
Imprison'd for some fault of his
In a body like a grave—
From you he only dares to crave,
For his service and his sorrow
A smile to-day, a song to-morrow.

The artist who this idol wrought
To echo all harmonious thought,
Fell'd a tree, while on the steep
The woods were in their winter sleep,
Rock'd in that repose divine
On the wind-swept Apennine;
And dreaming, some of Autumn past,
And some of Spring approaching fast,
And some of April buds and showers,
And some of songs in July bowers,
And all of love: And so this tree,—
Oh that such our death may be!—
Died in sleep, and felt no pain,
To live in happier form again:
From which, beneath heaven's fairest star,
The artist wrought this loved Guitar;
And taught it justly to reply
To all who questioned skilfully
In language gentle as thine own;
Whispering in enamour'd tone
Sweet oracles of woods and dells,
And summer winds in sylvan cells:
—For it had learnt all harmonies
Of the plains and of the skies,
Of the forests and the mountains,
And the many-voicéd fountains;
The clearest echoes of the hills,

The softest notes of falling rills,
The melodies of birds and bees,
The murmuring of summer seas,
And pattering rain, and breathing dew,
And airs of evening; and it knew
That seldom-heard mysterious sound
Which, driven on its diurnal round,
As it floats through boundless day,
Our world enkindles on its way:
—All this it knows, but will not tell
To those who cannot question well
The Spirit that inhabits it;
It talks according to the wit
Of its companions; and no more
Is heard than has been felt before
By those who tempt it to betray
These secrets of an elder day.
But, sweetly as its answers will
Flatter hands of perfect skill,
It keeps its highest holiest tone
For our beloved Friend alone.

P. B. Shelley.

L'ALLEGRO

HENCE, loathéd Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born
In Stygian cave forlorn
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy!
Find out some uncouth cell
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings
And the night-raven sings;
There under ebon shades, and low-brow'd rocks
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.

But come, thou Goddess fair and free,
In heaven yclept Euphrosyne,
And by men, heart-easing Mirth,
Whom lovely Venus at a birth
With two sister Graces more
To ivy-crownéd Bacchus bore;
Or whether (as some sager sing)
The frolic wind that breathes the spring
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-Maying—
There on beds of violets blue
And fresh-blown roses wash'd in dew
Fill'd her with thee, a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest, and youthful jollity,
Quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods, and becks, and wreathéd smiles
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides:—
Come, and trip it as you go
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty;
And if I give thee honour due
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee
In unreprovéd pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight
And singing startle the dull night
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow

Through the sweetbriar, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine:
While the cock with lively din
Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before;
Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill:
Sometime walking, not unseen,
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate
Where the great Sun begins his state
Robed in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
While the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures
Whilst the landscape round it measures;
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains, on whose barren breast
The labouring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide;
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosom'd high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some Beauty lies,
The Cynosure of neighbouring eyes.
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes
From betwixt two aged oaks,

Where Corydon and Thyrsis, met,
Are at their savoury dinner set
Of herbs, and other country messes
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
And then in haste her bower she leaves
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tann'd haycock in the mead.
Sometimes with secure delight
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth and many a maid,
Dancing in the chequer'd shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sun-shine holyday,
Till the live-long day-light fail:
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How Faery Mab the junkets eat:—
She was pinch'd, and pull'd, she said;
And he, by Friar's lantern led;
Tells how the drudging Goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath thresh'd the corn
That ten day-labourers could not end;
Then lies him down the lubber fiend,
And, stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lull'd asleep.
Tower'd cities please us then
And the busy hum of men,

Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit or arms, while both contend
To win her grace, whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask, and antique pageantry;
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learned sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.
And ever against eating cares
Lap me in soft Lydian airs
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linkéd sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber, on a bed
Of heap'd Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half-regain'd Eurydice.
These delights if thou canst give
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

J. Milton.

IL PENSEROSO

HENCE, vain deluding Joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred!
How little you bestead
Or fill the fixéd mind with all your toys!
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sunbeams,
Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.

But hail, thou goddess sage and holy,
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starr'd Ethiop queen that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The sea-nymphs, and their powers offended:
Yet thou art higher far descended:
Thee bright-hair'd Vesta, long of yore,
To solitary Saturn bore;
His daughter she; in Saturn's reign
Such mixture was not held a stain:
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
While yet there was no fear of Jove.
Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain
Flowing with majestic train,

And sable stole of Cipres lawn
Over thy decent shoulders drawn:
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There, held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast:
And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing:
And add to these retired Leisure
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure:—
But first and chiefest, with thee bring
Him that yon soars on golden wing
Guiding the fiery-wheeléd throne,
The cherub Contemplatión;
And the mute Silenec hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song
In her sweetest saddest plight
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke
Gently o'er the accustom'd oak.
—Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, chauntress, oft, the woods among
I woo, to hear thy even-song;
And missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering Moon
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the heaven's wide pathless way,

And oft, as if her head she bow'd,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft, on a plat of rising ground
I hear the far-off Curfeu sound
Over some wide-water'd shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar:
Or, if the air will not permit,
Some still removéd place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom;
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's drowsy charm
To bless the doors from nightly harm.
Or let my lamp at midnight hour
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear
With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind, that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook:
And of those demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet, or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
In scepter'd pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine;
Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.
But, O sad Virgin, that thy power
Might raise Musaeus from his bower,
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as, warbled to the string,

Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek
And made Hell grant what Love did seek!
Or call up him that left half-told
The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canacé to wife
That own'd the virtuous ring and glass;
And of the wondrous horse of brass
On which the Tartar king did ride:
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung
Of turneys, and of trophies hung,
Of forests, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited Morn appear,
Not trick'd and frounced as she was wont
With the Attic Boy to hunt,
But kercheft in a comely cloud
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or usher'd with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves
With minute drops from off the eaves.
And when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, goddess, bring
To archéd walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe, with heavéd stroke,
Was never heard the nymphs to daunt
Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.
There in close covert by some brook
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honey'd thigh

That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring,
With such consort as they keep
Entice the dewy-feather'd Sleep;
And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his wings in airy stream
Of lively portraiture display'd,
Softly on my eyelids laid:
And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
Or the unseen Genius of the wood.
But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloister's pale,
And love the high-embowéd roof,
With antique pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight
Casting a dim religious light.
There let the pealing organ blow
To the full-voiced choir below
In service high and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.
And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.

These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

J. Milton.

POEMS IN THE FORM OF ODES

ODE TO AUTUMN

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the ground, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease;
For Summer has o'erbrimm'd their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twinéd flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barréd clouds bloom the soft-dying day
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;

Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river-sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

J. Keats.

ODE TO WINTER

Germany, December, 1800

When first the fiery-mantled Sun
His heavenly race began to run,
Round the earth and ocean blue
His children four the Seasons flew.
First, in green apparel dancing,
The young Spring smiled with angel-grace;
Rosy Summer next advancing,
Rush'd into her sire's embrace—
Her bright-hair'd sire, who bade her keep
For ever nearest to his smiles,
On Calpe's olive-shaded steep
Or India's citron-cover'd isles:
More remote, and buxom-brown,
The Queen of vintage bow'd before his throne:
A rich pomegranate gemm'd her crown,
A ripe sheaf bound her zone.

But howling Winter fled afar
To hills that prop the polar star;
And loves on deer-borne car to ride
With barren darkness by his side,
Round the shore where loud Lofoden
Whirls to death the roaring whale,

Round the hall where Runic Odin
  Howls his war-song to the gale;
Save when adown the ravaged globe
  He travels on his native storm,
Deflowering Nature's grassy robe
  And trampling on her faded form:—
Till light's returning Lord assume
  The shaft that drives him to his polar field,
Of power to pierce his raven plume
  And crystal-cover'd shield.

Oh, sire of storms! whose savage ear
The Lapland drum delights to hear,
When Frenzy with her blood-shot eye
Implores thy dreadful deity—
Archangel! Power of desolation!
  Fast descending as thou art,
Say, hath mortal invocation
  Spells to touch thy stony heart?
Then, sullen Winter! hear my prayer,
And gently rule the ruin'd year;
Nor chill the wanderer's bosom bare
Nor freeze the wretch's falling tear:
To shuddering Want's unmantled bed
  Thy horror-breathing agues cease to lend,
And gently on the orphan head
  Of Innocence descend.

But chiefly spare, O king of clouds!
The sailor on his airy shrouds,
When wrecks and beacons strew the steep,
And spectres walk along the deep.
Milder yet thy snowy breezes
  Pour on yonder tented shores,
Where the Rhine's broad billow freezes,
  Or the dark-brown Danube roars.

Oh, winds of Winter! list ye there
To many a deep and dying groan?
Or start, ye demons of the midnight air,
At shrieks and thunders louder than your own?
Alas! ev'n your unhallow'd breath
May spare the victim fallen low;
But Man will ask no truce to death,—
No bounds to human woe.

T. Campbell.

ODE TO THE WEST WIND

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,
Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes! O thou
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed
The wingéd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow
Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odours plain and hill:
Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and Preserver; Hear, oh hear!

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of heaven and ocean,
Angels of rain and lightning! there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head
Of some fierce Maenad, ev'n from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height—

The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge
Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might
Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail, will burst: Oh hear!

Thou who didst waken from his summer-dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lull'd by the coil of his crystalline streams,
Beside a pumice isle in Baiae's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers,
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,
All overgrown with azure moss, and flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers
Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know
Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear
And tremble and despoil themselves: Oh hear!

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share
The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than Thou, O uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be
The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed
Scarce seem'd a vision,—I would ne'er have striven
As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!
A heavy weight of hours has chain'd and bow'd
One too like thee—tameless, and swift, and proud.

Make me thy lyre, ev'n as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies
Will take from both a deep autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit! be thou me, impetuous one!
Drive my dead thoughts over the universe,
Like wither'd leaves, to quicken a new birth;
And, by the incantation of this verse,
Scatter, as from an unextinguish'd hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawaken'd earth
The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

P. B. Shelley.

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happiness,—
That thou, light-wingéd Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O, for a draught of vintage! that hath been
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delvéd earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!

O for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stainéd mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies,
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs;
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalméd darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows

The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a muséd rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.

Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?

J. Keats.

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempé or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad purusit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
Forever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unweariéd,
Forever piping songs forever new;

More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,
For ever panting, and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
'Beauty is truth, truth beauty,'—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

J. Keats.

ODE TO DUTY

Stern Daughter of the Voice of God!
O Duty! if that name thou love
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove;

Thou who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations dost set free,
And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them; who, in love and truth
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth:
Glad hearts! without reproach or blot,
Who do thy work, and know it not:
Oh! if through confidence misplaced
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power! around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright
And happy will our nature be
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.
And they a blissful course may hold
Ev'n now, who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed;
Yet seek thy firm support, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried,
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust:
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferr'd
The task, in smoother walks to stray;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control,
But in the quietness of thought:

Me this uncharter'd freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance-desires:
My hopes no more must change their name;
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face:
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the Stars from wrong;
And the most ancient Heavens, through Thee, are
fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!
I call thee: I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour;
Oh let my weakness have an end!
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice;
The confidence of reason give;
And in the light of truth thy Bondman let me live.

W. Wordsworth.

ODE ON INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight
To me did seem
Apparell'd in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.

It is not now as it hath been of yore;—
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

The rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the rose;
The moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong.
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;—
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong:
I hear the echoes through the mountains throng,
The winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every beast keep holiday;—
Thou child of joy
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
Shepherd-boy!

Ye blesséd Creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
Oh evil day! if I were sullen
While Earth herself is adorning
This sweet May morning;
And the children are culling
On every side
In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm
And the babe leaps up on his mother's arm:—
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
—But there's a tree, of many, one,
A single field which I have look'd upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone:
The pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat:
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;

The Youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And, even with something of a mother's mind
And no unworthy aim,
The homely nurse doth all she can
To make her foster-child, her inmate, Man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' darling of a pigmy size!
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his father's eyes!
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learnéd art;
A wedding or a festival,
A mourning or a funeral;
And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song:
Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
But it will not be long
Ere this be thrown aside,
And with new joy and pride
The little actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his 'humorous stage'

With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
That life brings with her in her equipage;
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy soul's immensity;
Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted forever by the eternal Mind,—
Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
On whom those truths do rest
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the day, a master o'er a slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by;
Thou little child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That Nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!
The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest,

Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—
—Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts, before which our mortal nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprized:
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,
Are yet a master-light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
Nor man nor boy
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence, in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither;
Can in a moment travel thither—
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Then, sing ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound!

We, in thought, will join your throng
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May!
What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now forever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
Forbode not any severing of our loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
I only have relinquish'd one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway:
I love the brooks which down their channels fret
Even more than when I tripp'd lightly as they;
The innocent brightness of a new-born day
Is lovely yet;
The clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

W. Wordsworth.

NOTES

NOTES

OLD BALLADS

SIR PATRICK SPENS

(Page 3)

It is thought that this ballad may have had historical foundation in a journey taken to Norway, in the thirteenth century, to bring home a princess to her Scottish throne. But whether this is true or not, the present form of the ballad is due to the hands through which it has passed, and to them we owe the fine vigor of its tone and the simplicity of its suggested tragedy. The only words which may offer difficulty to the reader are as follows:

braid: broad
laith: loath
shoone: shoes
aboone: above (them)

JOHNIE ARMSTRONG

(Page 4)

We have record of a historical John Armstrong, who lived a free and lawless life on the Scottish border until his king, probably by treacherous means, brought about his death. The signs of traditional ballad treatment are very evident. Not only are the dress and equipment of his eight score men "all alike," but the details of their costume follow the fashion of the well-known ballad hero. The letter written by the king was "large and long," reminding us of the "braid" letter sent Sir Patrick Spens, and we are told in each case that the king signed his letter with his own hand. Even the stirring valor of Johnie's encouragement to his men in the next to the last stanza appears in different versions through ballad literature. Another version of the eleventh stanza makes the meaning a little more clear:

I have asked grace of a graceless face,
No pardon here is for you nor me.

Goldsmith wrote that he thought the music of the finest singer of his day was "dissonance to what I felt when our old dairy-maid sung me into tears with *Johnie Armstrong's Last Good-Night*."

THE BATTLE OF OTTERBURN

(Page 7)

Perhaps the most typical of the old English ballads are those that celebrate the heroic deeds of warfare on the "Border," where strove the hostile nobles with their retinues, English on the one side, Scottish on the other. And of these ballads, that of *The Battle of Otterburn* is certainly the most famous. It was of that or the ballad of *Chevy Chase*, based apparently on the same incident, that Sidney wrote: "I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet; and yet it is sung by some blind crowder (beggar), with no rougher voice than rude style." And in the various forms in which the old ballad has come down to us, it has been singularly popular ever since. The materials for the version given here were collected by Sir Walter Scott from earlier versions of the old tradition; the arrangement and wording are his own.

The ballad is based on a historical battle waged between Scottish and English forces, August 19th, 1388, and recorded in Froissart's *Chronicles* from the accounts of those who had actually taken part in the fray. The basis of fact on which the story is built is, briefly, as follows: The Scottish party, under the Earl of Douglas, invaded the hostile country and came in conflict with an English force, including Sir Henry Percy, at the stronghold of Newcastle; the quarrel between the two leaders was interrupted by the withdrawal of the Scottish troops, and was continued some days later when the English force overtook their enemies at a point further north; the battle was ended when Douglas was killed and Percy was led away captive. This bare outline, then, is true, as is the fact that Douglas wished his death to be concealed from both friend and foe; but the rest is the picturesque element added gradually in the telling and retelling of the tale,—the first haughty challenge, the appointment to meet after three days at Otterburn, the incident

of the page and the foreboding dream, the last episode between Percy and Sir Henry the Montgomery. And these are the things, when we come to think of it, that cast an atmosphere about the story, raising it from a literal account of a bloody battle to a stirring tale of chivalry.

To the ballad's basis in actual historical fact is to be attributed the use made of geographical names,—the castles and rivers of north-west England about Newcastle, near the mouth of the river Tyne. And in the same way do we account for the familiar names of prominent Scotch families mentioned as having taken part with Douglas in his raid. Of the Scotch form of words made use of in the ballad, most will easily be recognized from their sound: those not so easy to understand are explained in the following list:

ain: own
ane: one
bent: field
braken: fern
dight: prepare for
fain: pleased
fell: skin
fend: provision
kale: cabbage
Lammas tide: a harvest festival
lily lee: fair glade
loun: good-for-naught
muir-men: moor men
pallions: tents
recks: matters
sair: sore
saut: salt
swapped: struck
swat: sweated
tane: one
win: dry by airing

ROBIN HOOD'S DEATH

(Page 11)

About the figure of the gallant outlaw, Robin Hood, and the "merry men" who made up his band, cluster a great many stories that have come down to us in the form of ballads. Of these there is room for only one here—but it is one of the best. It will well repay those who care for Robin Hood to look up the tales of his every-day adventures; yet perhaps none of them show so much courtesy and manly, dignified pathos as this story of his death at the hands of his treacherous cousin. The circumstantial telling of the tale, with the use of proper names, is not to be taken as evidence that the ballad is based on fact: we are not even sure that Robin Hood existed as a historical person. The best scholarly opinion, however, is that an outlaw did live in early times whose exploits gave rise to many fictitious tales. In this example we find traces of a refrain, showing that the ballad was originally meant to be sung.

The words which need explanation follow:

dree: be able
flee: fly
ring: door-knocker
win: go

THE TWA CORBIES

(Page 14)

This ballad follows the unusual method of telling its story by suggestion. The tragedy has already taken place, but the brief dialogue of the ravens makes the story terribly clear. Few poems better exemplify the quality of condensation, typical of ballads as a class. A few words may need explanation:

ae: one
corbies: ravens
een: eyes
fail: turf
hause-bane: neck bone
kens: knows
mane: lamentation
tane: one
theek: thatch

YOUNG WATERS

(Page 15)

Although there is no positive evidence to connect this ballad with a historical incident, it is interesting to note that the story is definitely placed in the Scottish town of Stirling, north of which still stands an eminence known as " Heading Hill." It is not altogether clear whether the reference to the " round tables " indicates an indoor game or the custom of holding tournaments among the knights of a single court. The horse, " gowden graithd " before, is caparisoned in gold, unless the mention of silver shoes behind implies that his forefeet were shod with gold.

LORD RANDAL

(Page 17)

The story told in this ballad has been current in England and on the Continent for hundreds of years, and appears in a great variety of forms. In the great collection of English ballads edited by Child there are nineteen versions, each differing from the others in nearly every detail. For example, the recurring line of address to the young man has many different forms, from the dignified " Lord Randal, my son," of this version, to the childish " My wee, wee croudlin' doo doo."

THE BAILIFF'S DAUGHTER OF ISLINGTON

(Page 18)

The idea on which this ballad is founded is current in the songs of several countries of Europe. It has always been a favorite ballad in England, and the music to which it is commonly sung is still preserved.

LATE BALLADS

LORD ULLIN'S DAUGHTER

(Page 20)

Though this is a ballad written in modern times, it is singularly true to the spirit of the old ballad literature. Its strong sense of "action," its rapid movement, its direct simple phrasing, its sole concern with telling the story, not interpreting it or commenting on it,—these things it has in common with the ballads of old England. Are there any qualities that mark it as nevertheless a modern ballad?

LADY CLARE

(Page 22)

Although there is no attempt here to imitate the characteristic subject-matter of the old ballads, it is easy to find resemblances in the simple directness of treatment and style.

LUCY GRAY

(Page 25)

"Written at Goslar, in Germany, in 1799. It was founded on a circumstance told me by my sister, of a little girl who not far from Halifax, in Yorkshire, was bewildered in a snow-storm. Her footsteps were tracked by her parents to the middle of a lock of a canal, and no other vestige of her, backward or forward, could be traced."—*Wordsworth's note.*

THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS

(Page 27)

Longfellow writes in his diary of how he wrote the ballad on the "*Wreck of the Hesperus,* on the reef of Norman's Woe, in the great storm of a fortnight ago." He says: "I sat till twelve o'clock by my fire smoking, when suddenly it came into my mind to write the Ballad of the Schooner Hesperus; which I accordingly did. Then I went to bed, but could not sleep. New thoughts were running in my mind, and I got up to add them to the ballad. It was three by the clock. I then went to bed and fell asleep. I feel pleased with the ballad. It hardly cost me an effort. It did not come into my mind by lines, but by stanzas."

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

(Page 30)

The idea of the poem seems to have been suggested by the name of an old translation that Keats had run across in his reading. But it was the name only that attracted Keats, for the older poem has nothing in common with his. It is not a poem to analyze in a search for "meaning," but one to read again and again for the haunting weirdness of its tone.

EARL MARCH LOOK'D ON HIS DYING CHILD

(Page 32)

This is one of the most condensed stories to be found in our literature. Note how much is told and implied in the first stanza alone, and then observe how much of the subsequent story is read between the lines of condensed, rapid action.

THE PRIDE OF YOUTH

(Page 32)

One of Madge Wildfire's songs in the *Heart of Midlothian.* Of this song Palgrave says: "Scott has given us nothing more complete and lovely than this little song, which unites simplicity and dramatic power to a wild-wood music of the rarest quality. No moral is drawn, far less any conscious analysis of feeling attempted:—the pathetic meaning

is left to be suggested by the mere presentment of the situation."

ROSABELLE

(Page 33)

The ballad sung by Harold in the sixth canto of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel.* The superstitious premonitions of danger are familiar features of old ballad literature, but through the poem, and especially in the descriptive stanzas near the end, there is a quality of diction and meter that marks the modern artist. In stanza three, *inch* is a Scotch word for "island." The game referred to in the sixth stanza is of course that of catching a suspended ring upon the sword-point as one rides by at full gallop.

SHORT NARRATIVE POEMS

LOVE

(Page 36)

This poem, with a few stanzas added at beginning and end, and with a few changes, was first published as the Introduction of a longer poem, begun but never completed, that was to be entitled *The Ballad of the Dark Ladie.*

HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM GHENT TO AIX

(Page 42)

The sense of galloping speed that this poem produces is due not alone to the strong anapestic meter, but to an impression of the landscape, which comes in a series of rapidly flashed pictures, as they would be seen by a preoccupied rider from the back of a fast moving horse. The poem has no historical foundation: Browning wrote it, as he says, "under the bulwark of a vessel, off the African coast, after I had been at sea long enough to appreciate even the fancy of a gallop on the back of a certain good horse, 'York,' then in my stable at home."

LAODAMÍA

(Page 44)

"Written at Rydal Mount. The incident of the trees growing and withering put the subject into my thoughts, and I wrote with the hope of giving it a loftier tone than, so far as I know, has been given to it by any of the ancients who have treated of it. It cost me more trouble than almost anything of equal length I have ever written."—*Wordsworth's note.*

This poem stands apart from the body of Wordsworth's work, as an attempt to express a story of classic origin in the spirit of Greek life. The ideal of calm self-possession, of dignified restraint when under emotional stress, is felt not only in the incident chosen, but in the manner of the telling—the simple diction, with its few, well-chosen adjectives, the even, melodious verse. The spirit that we think of as peculiarly Greek is admirably summed up in the thirteenth stanza, and in harmony with this is the picture of future happiness, as conceived by the Greeks, in stanzas seventeen and eighteen. The qualities we speak of appear perhaps most clearly when we contrast this poem with one in the spirit of mediæval romance, like *The Eve of St. Agnes.*

THE OUTLAW

(Page 49)

A song by the leader of the outlaws in the third canto of *Rokeby.* The introductory words give an idea of the scene:

> With desperate merriment he sung,
> The cavern to the chorus rung,
> Yet mingled with his reckless glee
> Remorse's bitter agony.

MY LAST DUCHESS

(Page 51)

The speaker is an Italian nobleman, whose former wife—his "last duchess"—has died, and who now is about to arrange details of dowry with the father of the woman he next proposes to marry. In displaying her portrait—by a mythical Frà Pandolf—the nobleman brings out indirectly the story of his former marriage,—the wife's offense in bestow-

ing her smiles and gratitude on all men alike, and not reserving them for her husband alone; the husband's "commands," so grimly suggested in the words, "Then all smiles stopped together." The wife's innocent, gracious personality is indicated in a few telling lines; stronger yet is the impression received of the coldly inhuman nature of the husband. Feeling that his wife, in accepting his "nine-hundred-years-old-name," has therefore surrendered herself, body and soul, to his pleasure, he is unwilling to compromise his dignity by stooping to correct her fault, but prefers to uphold his honor, instead, by the issue of his "commands." The impression of character that this makes is heightened by the fact that the nobleman sees fit to narrate these facts to the father of his next bride, on the eve of her marriage; still more by the indifference with which he turns to speak, in leaving, of a cherished piece of bronze statuary.

STORIES OF BATTLE AND WAR

INCIDENT OF THE FRENCH CAMP

(Page 54)

The storming of Ratisbon took place in 1809. The incident here narrated is true, except for the fact that the hero was not a boy but a man.

HOHENLINDEN

(Page 55)

The poem gets its title from the name of a village in Bavaria near Munich, where was fought in 1800 a battle between the Austrians and the French. Our sympathies are not directed to one side or the other; the poem is simply the picture of a battle, seen in a few vivid flashes. The abruptness of the changes from stanza to stanza is in the spirit of the old ballads, but very different are the meter and the diction, and the final impression of the poem.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

(Page 58)

The poem tells an actual incident in the battle of Balaclava, during the Crimean War, the news of which

stirred England deeply. It is recorded that the expression "Some one had blundered," occurring in a newspaper dispatch, gave Tennyson the idea of the poem and suggested the swing of the verse.

BATTLE OF THE BALTIC

(Page 59)

This poem signalized one of Lord Nelson's greatest naval victories. The poem contains all that need be known for its complete understanding; the words "gallant good" applied to Captain Riou in the last stanza were used by Nelson himself when he wrote home his dispatches.

HERVÉ RIEL

(Page 64)

Browning founded his poem on an actual incident from local French history. It is interesting to notice what sort of incidents of heroism Browning chose for his poems, and what aspects of those incidents he liked to dwell upon. The present poem is an instructive example. When it was published, in 1871, Browning sent the sum that he received for it, five hundred pounds, for the relief of the people in Paris suffering as a result of the Franco-German war.

THE REVENGE

(Page 72)

The poem follows closely the recorded incidents of a battle mentioned by Sir Walter Raleigh as having been joined at three o'clock in the afternoon on August 31st, 1591. From the contemporary accounts we learn the bravery of the English sailor; but the strong sense of personality—rugged valor and downright speech—comes from Tennyson's handling. To him too is due the vigorous sense of action in the battle itself. How the free metrical treatment of the poem, with its long, swinging lines here and its abrupt passages there, helps bring about this effect becomes very clear when we give the poem a spirited interpretation in reading aloud.

THE BATTLE OF NASEBY

(Page 78)

The battle was fought in 1645 and was the first important victory of the "Roundheads," under Cromwell, over the Royalists, under King Charles. The poem tells accurately of the wavering fortunes of the battle, from the standpoint of an officer in Cromwell's army, a sergeant whose very name indicates the religious zeal actuating the conquerors. To them their cause was Heaven's, and their general, the "brave Oliver" of the eighth stanza, was indeed a "servant of the Lord." King Charles, on the other hand, "the Man of Blood," who was leading his "godless horsemen," including his German allies under Rupert, was a coward and an enemy of the true religion, whose gallants were destined to have their heads rot on Temple Bar, at the entrance to the city of London. In the closing stanzas is expressed the Roundhead's contempt for the luxuries and affectations of court life, his hatred for the Roman Catholic influence, represented in England by King Charles, and his exulting triumph over Rome itself, "She of the seven hills," mother of the church that Cromwell and his men were fighting. The rough vigor of the Roundhead cause expresses itself not only in the downright diction of the poem, but in the strong, rude rhythm as well, with its heavy accents and well-marked internal rime. An equally vigorous expression of the Royalist's attitude is found in Browning's *Cavalier Tunes*.

PHEIDIPPIDES

(Page 80)

The germ of the story comes to us from Herodotus,—how Pheidippides, the runner, was sent to ask Sparta's aid to save Athens from destruction at the hands of the invading Persian army, how they put him off, and how, on the return journey, while his indignation blazed against Sparta's false friendship, he came upon Pan, who promised to aid the Athenians, and foretold victory for them at Marathon. Another tradition tells how a courier ran with the news of the Grecian triumph at Marathon to the anxious people in Athens, and then died from exhaustion when his message was delivered.

For Browning there was great appeal in the simple hero-

ism of the story,—the spectacle of sheer will power, sustained by a high purpose, triumphing over the physical difficulties of the task. The same feeling on this point finds other expression in the stanzas in honor of Roland, the gallant horse that brought the good news to Aix, and, staggering in with his message, died. But in the story as Browning tells it, the most significant thing is not the physical heroism, but the hero's attitude toward reward. "Release from the racer's toil" was the reward offered by Pan, and the runner modestly accepted it, as meaning a quiet life with a wife and a growing family. At this point there is much in common between the true-hearted Greek and Hervé Riel, the simple Breton fisherman of Browning's other tale. But the heroism of Pheidippides is pitched to a higher note, and for him was reserved a higher kind of reward,—to put forth once more his utmost effort in the service of his country, and to die at the moment of achievement.

It remains to go over the stanzas in order, making such illustrative comment as seems called for. The runner's final message, "Rejoice, we conquer," is used after the title as a motto for the poem. The poem begins with the words of the runner on reaching Athens on his return from Sparta, and all the stanzas but the last four are the continuation of his story. First he salutes his country and its protector Pan, equal in praise with Zeus, Athene, and Artemis. Then he addresses the archons, or rulers, of Athens, as they stand adorned with the tettix, a gold ornament in the shape of a grasshopper, emblematic of their nativity. The race he had run was to Sparta, more than one hundred and forty miles to the south. He had given the people his message—that Persia, having conquered Eretria, an island city near Greece, had landed near Athens and demanded an offering of water and earth in token of surrender to absolute slavery. The urgency of his message was such that when the Spartans hesitated it seemed to him that the very gods must compel them to answer favorably. But no, they made an excuse to justify their delay, and Pheidippides was off on the return journey again, pouring out his indignation, as he ran, upon the woods and the streams he passed. Had the Gods of his country, he cried, remembered the animals bound with fillets and sacrificed in their honor, had they been grateful for the full libations poured out for them? The trees that furnish leaves for the victor's wreaths should fade before they adorn the tyrant Persian; but the wastes of the wild Mount

Parnes will offer no false hopes. Plunging into a hollow, he suddenly meets with Pan, the god of the woodland, wild man above, and goat below, striking terror at the first glance, yet showing in the end a rough kindliness of heart. The promise of protection follows, and Pan offers a handful of fennel, the herb after which the field of Marathon was named, to indicate the place of the coming victory. For Pheidippides himself Pan promises—but the runner does not say, save that it is reward enough. When pressed to tell by Miltiades, the Greek commander, Pheidippides tells the words of the god, but puts his own modest interpretation on them.

Soon after was fought the battle of Marathon (B.C. 490), in which Miltiades inflicted a telling defeat on the Persian army. But the battle was at the seashore, some twenty miles to the northeast of Athens, and a courier was needed to carry news of the victory to the anxious citizens at the Capital. Again Pheidippides was called on, and again he answered the call, earning thus the heroic "release" that had been promised by the friendly god.

In connection with this poem it is interesting to note that in the modern Olympian games the most important contest is the long-distance run called the "Marathon race," and that when in recent years the games were revived, in Athens itself, the race was over the very course traversed by Pheidippides in Browning's story.

LONGER NARRATIVE POEMS

THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

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This poem was begun early in 1819, and underwent considerable revision before being published the next year. Keats, in a letter to his brother, dated February 14th, 1819, speaks of being on a visit in Hampshire when he "took down some thin paper, and wrote on it a little poem called St. Agnes's Eve."

The Feast of St. Agnes comes on the 21st of January, and the Eve, of course, on the preceding night. Regarding the traditions connected with the occasion we quote a passage

from Leigh Hunt: "St. Agnes was a Roman virgin, who suffered martyrdom in the reign of Diocletian. Her parents, a few days after her decease, are said to have had a vision of her, surrounded by angels, and attended by a white lamb, which afterwards became sacred to her. In the Catholic church formerly the nuns used to bring a couple of lambs to her altar during mass. The superstition is (for we believe it is still to be found) that by taking certain measures of divination, damsels may get a sight of their future husbands in a dream. The ordinary process seems to have been by fasting."

The qualities that delight us in the best of Keats's poetry, perhaps most of all in this poem, are phrased perfectly by F. T. Palgrave, in the opening words to the preface of his volume of selections: "Copiousness in exquisite detail, perpetual freshness of phrase." The truth of this characterization comes to us when we find that our chief pleasure in the poem is not in following its narrative part, itself a slight but perfect thing, but in pausing over the descriptive scenes, with their rich suggestions to the senses and imagination. If we read some of the descriptions from Spenser's Faerie Queene, from which Keats borrowed his stanza form, we see some of the shaping influences that brought forth this poem. From Spenser is the sensuous melody of line, and the love of the antique word,—*gossip, cates, amort.* But the final perfectness belongs to Keats himself—his fertile mind rich in sumptuous imagery, his critical sense feeling with laborious care and delicate sensitiveness for the one happy phrase to express it best.

Of all the features of Keats's diction, there is space here to mention only one,—the condensed, suggestive phrase in which a word changes its normal part of speech, to stand in a new relation with other words. Such, in stanza VII, is the phrasing in the line

Came many a *tiptoe,* amorous cavalier,

or, in stanza XIII, "the little *moonlight* room." The description of Angela in stanza XVIII as a "palsy-stricken, *churchyard* thing" is another out of many examples we might find, typical of the way in which poetry, absorbed with the inner heart of things, makes rule-bound language flexible, to serve her ends.

But it is not alone in the exquisite phrase or glowing im-

age that the artistic value of the poem lies. We find it too in the structure, one feature of which is worth special notice. The story is one of passion, the warm love of youth, and in harmony with this are the richly colored descriptions of the dance, of Madeline's chamber, of the banquet set forth in the moonlight. But at the very beginning of the poem, and at its end, framing the story of warm, romantic love, is the picture of the ancient beadsman, in the cold night without, living the end of his lonely, loveless existence. From the first stanza the interest shifts gradually to the scene of indoor revelry, and when the romantic story is done, we revert once more to the old beadsman, who has ended at last his cheerless life, among the cold ashes without.

Stanza I. We notice how the effect of chill is given, not alone in the images suggested to the imagination, but in the very sound of the words, particularly in the rime-words *cold, fold, told, old.* The most notable example of this is in Milton's sonnet *On the Late Massacre in Piedmont.*

Stanza II. It does not do to try to get at the meaning of such a line as the sixth in this stanza by too close an analysis: we get the *feeling* at once, and that is the chief thing.

Stanza III. Leigh Hunt writes, of the third line: "This 'flattered' is exquisite. . . . Yes, the poor old man was moved, by the sweet music, to think that so sweet a thing was intended for his comfort as well as for others. . . . But it was not to be. We must, therefore, console ourselves with knowing, that this icy endurance of his was the last, and that he soon found himself at the sunny gate of heaven."

Stanza VIII. "The use of the old word *amort* is peculiarly happy: it is more expressive of deadened perception than any other single word, and is full of poetic associations." *Forman's note.*

For the allusion in *lambs unshorn,* see note to stanza XIII.

Stanza XII. *Gossip,* according to older usage, often meant a neighborly old woman.

Stanza XIII. "*St. Agnes' wool* is that shorn from two lambs which (allusive to the Saint's name), were upon that day brought to Mass, and offered while the *Agnus* was chanted. The wool was then spun, dressed, and woven by the hand of Nuns." *Palgrave's note.*

Stanza XIX. Forman explains the last lines as follows: "The monstrous debt was his monstrous existence, which he owed to a demon and repaid when he died or disappeared through the working of one of his own spells by Viviane."

Stanza XXII. "Rose, like a missioned spirit, unaware." This exquisite line reached its final form only after repeated blotting. The manuscript shows that Keats wrote it so after trying the effect of the following phrases: "like an affrighted Bird," "like an affrighted Swan," "Rose like a spirit to her unaware."

Stanza XXIV. Forman's note on this famous stanza begins: "This sumptuous passage occupied the poet's care very considerably." The editor then gives exhaustively the history of the earlier forms of the stanza, showing how laboriously genius works in attaining its most perfect results. A lover of poetry would find much interest in reading all the notes upon the poem in this editor's scholarly work.

Stanza XXV. "*Gules:* a heraldic term for *red:*—transmitted here through the coat-of-arms in the casement." *Palgrave's note.*

Stanza XXVII. Leigh Hunt explains the line as follows: "Clasped like a missal in a land of *Pagans:* that is to say, where Christian prayer-books must not be seen, and are, therefore, doubly cherished for the danger."

Stanza XXX. *Soother* seems used here for *smoother.*

Stanza XXXVI. The suggestion of the frost-wind and the sleet reminds us again of the cold night without, and prepares us for the return to it in the last stanza.

Stanza XL. Leigh Hunt remarks, regarding the last line: "This is a slip of the memory, for there were hardly carpets in those days. But the truth of the painting makes amends, as in the unchronological pictures of old masters."

Stanza XLII. We note that the last word repeats the same rime tone that was so impressively used in the first stanza.

THE ANCIENT MARINER

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The interesting circumstances under which the poem was written, soon after the friendship between Coleridge and Wordsworth was established in their early manhood, can best be told in the words of the latter. "In reference to this poem I will here mention one of the most noticeable facts in my own poetic history and that of Mr. Coleridge. In the autumn of 1797, he, my sister, and myself started from Alfoxden pretty late in the afternoon, with a view to visit Lintoun and the Valley of Stones near to it; and as our

united funds were very small, we agreed to defray the expense of the tour by writing a poem to be sent to the *New Monthly Magazine* set up by Phillips the bookseller, and edited by Dr. Aiken. Accordingly, we set off, and proceeded along the Quantock Hills toward Watchet, and in the course of this walk was planned the poem of *The Ancient Mariner*, founded on a dream, as Mr. Coleridge said, of his friend Mr. Cruikshank. Much the greatest part of the story was Mr. Coleridge's invention; but certain parts I suggested. . . . We began the composition together, on that to me memorable evening; I furnished two or three lines at the beginning of the poem, in particular:—

> And listens like a three years' child:
> The Mariner hath his will.

These trifling contributions, all but one, which Mr. C. has with unnecessary scrupulosity recorded, slipped out of his mind, as well they might. As we endeavored to proceed conjointly (I speak of the same evening), our respective manners proved so widely different that it would have been quite presumptuous in me to do anything but separate from an undertaking upon which I could only have been a clog."

The poem grew under Coleridge's hands, and was not completed till several months later, when it was published, not in the magazine, as originally planned, but, together with certain poems of Wordsworth's, in the famous volume entitled *Lyrical Ballads,* 1798. The marginal gloss, that plays with fine imaginative force over the progress of the story, was an after-thought, and did not appear till a later edition of the poem.

The first reading of *The Ancient Mariner* gives an immediate sense of vivid imaginative power. It is likely, however, that in this first reading much will escape us that a closer reading would reveal. The details are fused into an effect singularly delicate and harmonious, yet the examination of these details enhances, rather than detracts from, that single impression, mysterious and haunting.

As foundation for the whole poem there is the story itself, conceived as a literal statement of definite happenings. These are stated so that we can follow them with accuracy if we take the pains. As the ship leaves the harbor, the dropping from sight first of the kirk, then of the hill, finally of the lighthouse top, gives a condensed picture of a North

Devonshire harbor town, with its church and cluster of houses nestled in a cleft of the steep hills that overhang the sea. From that point the geography is that of the globe itself, with no distinguishing parts but the opposite poles and the torrid equator between. Yet we are always kept aware of the position of the ship on this mysterious waste, where reality fades into marvel. First the vessel goes straight to the southern polar seas, where the albatross meets and saves it from the ice. After the shooting of the friendly bird, the ship comes under the influence of the avenging Polar Spirit. Accordingly, while the sun rises upon the right, the ship sails before the south wind to the regions of tropic calm, where, from the direction of the setting sun, comes the specter bark with its ghostly crew. When, later, the ship takes its mysterious course "moved onward from beneath," it goes, still under the guidance of the Polar Spirit, until it reaches the equator, where

> The Sun, right up above the mast,
> Had fixed her to the ocean.

There the struggle between the Polar Spirit, that could not cross north of the line, and the Guardian Saint, striving to bring the Ancient Mariner to the wholesome regions of fresh breezes and sweet human life, is evident in the "short, uneasy motion" with which the ship tugs at her bonds. But the Mariner "hath penance done, and penance more will do," and so with a sudden bound the ship starts forward, into the region of "gentle weather," where its single living passenger looks, not on the unearthly colors in which had swum his ship, but on the "ocean green" which stretched to the welcome lighthouse top and hill and kirk of his own familiar harbor.

Of course, the forces that move behind the strange adventures of this mystic world are spiritual forces, and the poem tells their story as well. The key to this spiritual experience is, to be sure, given in the familiar stanza near the end, beginning "He prayeth best who loveth best," but the experience itself is a far more subtle thing than can be summed up and disposed of in a "moral" of a few lines. Instead of being satisfied, then, with repeating this single stanza, we can profitably note some of the questions that bear upon the interpretation of the story. Were there, for instance, any circumstances that made the shooting of the bird a specially wanton act? Was the crime simply in killing

the albatross? How do we explain the falling of the bird from the Mariner's neck? Why was the expiation not then complete, and wherein consisted the added penance that was required? How far did his Guardian Saint assist him, and how much was left for himself to do? These are some of the questions underlying the progress of the tale. We are aware of them, not as requiring definite categorical answers, but as pointing to the poem's spiritual significance. If we follow them sympathetically, perhaps it will be found that the stanza that could best be spared from the poem is that containing the oft-quoted moral near the end.

In the metrical power of the poem lies much of its peculiar attractiveness. It is easy to note that the verse is that traditionally associated with the old English ballads, and so consider the matter disposed of. But the simple strength of the old ballad measure is only a part of the charm: the effects that Coleridge has added give the poem its full metrical distinction. Instead of confining himself to the four lines of the old ballad measure, Coleridge freely expands his stanza, sometimes to more than twice its ordinary length, when the thought is sustained through a longer passage. The simile near the end of Part I,. and the picture under the rising moon at the close of Part III, are interesting examples, showing how a succession of four-foot lines, with recurring rimes, gives to the stanza a sense of heightened climax. Internal rime appears intermittently, where it lightens the lyric speed of a stanza. Alliteration is used with something of the same effect. Together they cause such a stanza as that beginning "The fair breeze blew" to sing on the tongue, and linger in the memory. The ballad measure is meant to be read aloud. If we so read this poem we shall be aware of another characteristic of ballad style made use of here with singular effectiveness,—namely, repetition. To that we owe the vivid picture of the Mariner's face and figure, with its striking details, so few, yet so strongly impressed on our imagination. This effect, strong in itself, is often enhanced by the recurring verse accent, as in the line

Day after day, day after day,

or, more notably, in the two lines

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea.

In perfect harmony with these metrical qualities, and taking its tone too from the traditional usage of old ballad literature, is the diction of the poem. Its most obvious quality is its simplicity, its primitive quaintness. The directness of such a line as "The sun came up upon the left" is one example; another is the naïveté of such a construction as "The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast." Artless we should call it, yet so harmoniously is it combined with other qualities, that we recognize behind it both strong imagination and sure taste. For example, note the effectiveness of the archaic forms introduced here and there in the poem. "Eftsoons," "swound," "Gramercy," "uprist"—such examples as these, without obtruding themselves on our attention, help create the atmosphere of old times and old speech in which the Ancient Mariner appropriately lives. Figures are naturally infrequent in such a style as this, yet when they are used, they are strikingly vigorous—

> The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out;
> At one stride comes the dark.

Most noteworthy of all, however, is the concreteness of the diction, its constant appeal to the physical senses. The result is that we more than receive abstract ideas—we experience the sensations out of which they are made. The ship turned north, but what we are told is that the sun now rose upon the right; the sea was infested with unpleasant animal life, but what we see is slimy things crawling with legs upon a slimy sea. So it is throughout. The colors of the enchanted sea, the sound of the uprising souls, the feel of the unslaked throat and baked lips,—in such images as these a man of simple nature gets his impressions, and in such he gives us a vivid sense of sharing them.

These are some of the results when we consider the poem in its details, one at a time. What is the total effect when all are taken together? No one quality takes precedence over the others; rather, all are united in one single impression. It takes our imagination captive, and by degrees leads it into a region where the real and the unreal, the plausible and the impossible, are fused into one, and we care not to disentangle them. If, by chance, we should care, "something inexplicable will remain to tease us," and in that very fact will be found much of the spell that the poem casts over us. As Professor Beers has excellently put it: "*The Ancient*

Mariner is the baseless fabric of a vision. We are put under a spell, like the wedding guest, and carried off to the isolation and remoteness of mid-ocean. Through the chinks of the narrative, the wedding music sounds unreal and far off. What may not happen to a man alone on a wide, wide sea? The line between earthly and unearthly vanishes. Did the mariner really see the spectral bark and hear spirits talking, or was it all but the phantasmagoria of the calenture, the fever that attacks the sailor on the tropic main, so that he seems to see green meadows and water brooks on the level brine? No one can tell; for he is himself the only witness, and the ship is sunk at the harbor mouth. One conjectures that no wreckers or divers will ever bring it to the top again. Nay, was not the mariner, too, a specter? Now he is gone, and what was all this that he told me, thinks the wedding guest, as he rises on the morrow morn. Or did he tell me, or did I only dream it? A light shadow cast by some invisible thing swiftly traverses the sunny face of nature and is gone. Did we see it, or imagine it? Even so elusive, so uncertain, so shadowy and phantom-like is the spiriting of this wonderful poem."

SOHRAB AND RUSTUM

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This "episode," the most important of Matthew Arnold's narrative poems, was published in 1853, in the earlier part of the poet's literary activity. In theme and style it stands distinctly apart from other narrative poems in English, and so invites a brief inquiry on certain special points.

The material of the story comes from ancient Persian tradition as preserved in the *Shah Nameh*, a legendary history of Persia's early kings and champions. The account of Sohrab and Rustum as it appears in that poem is far longer and more complicated than Arnold's story; yet the central situation is the same in both, as well as many of the essential circumstances. A detailed comparison of the two would show how Arnold has simplified the events of his poem for the sake of more concentrated interest. For example, the combat, according to the legend, is not ended until the evening of the third day of hard fighting, whereas in Arnold the whole episode falls within the compass of a single day. In both stories Sohrab's ruling motive is the same—his

intense desire to find his father; but in the legendary account the armies do not await the outcome of a single combat: they are themselves engaged in a general conflict, the heroes having retired by common consent to a more lonely spot to fight their battle undisturbed. Other differences might be mentioned, notably the selfish motive assigned by the old legend to the Tartar king, in his desire to have Rustum killed in the fight; but greater detail does not concern the average reader: Arnold's poem is complete in itself, and while a certain curiosity as to the origin of his poem is natural, full appreciation of it does not require an accurate comparison with the ancient source.

Nor is there need to look up and identify all the Oriental names that appear in the poem, especially in its first part. The names that are important explain themselves, and the others serve another purpose. All we need know geographically is that the armies meet on the shores of the Oxus, a great river south of Turkestan and to the north of modern Persia. And the characters we need to keep in mind are few. The Persian army, on which side Rustum fought, was led by Ferood, assisted by Gudurz and several other chiefs; their king, Kai Khosroo, was not at this time upon the field. On Sohrab's side, Peran-Wisa, with his lieutenant Haman, commanded the wild Tartar tribes of King Afrasiab. In Seistan, in the heart of Persia, lived the white-haired Zal, Rustum's aged father.

The purpose of the other names of places and people used so lavishly in the poem is of course to give the atmosphere of Oriental life and custom in which the story moves. Especially effective in this way is the description of the marshaled hosts preparatory to the battle. We recall how Scott, with like success, uses local names for the same purpose; and when we remember how devotedly Arnold admired the great works of Greek literature, we are not surprised to find him, in this particular as in others, following the notable example of Homer himself.

But though we may not care to follow in detail the changes that Arnold introduces in telling his story, we cannot help being conscious of the vital bearing of the minor elements upon the total effect of the poem. The motives that compel each hero to the conflict, and that deter Rustum from revealing his identity, the strange effect that each had on the other, the wavering fortunes of battle that give the father the nominal victory, but not at the expense of the son's

prowess,—of all these things we feel the effect, as we follow the simple progress of the tale. Tragic the story is, but the nobility of it is greater, and the final impression is of the dignity and worth of the human soul.

One more observation of a general nature is pertinent. The narrative style of the poem is direct and simple in the extreme. Line after line, we find an unembellished succession of plain statements. No conscious graces of style here, no distracting reminders of the author's personality, but simply the story itself, moving and powerful because of its inherent qualities. Decorative beauty there is too, however, singularly exquisite and appealing: we find it in the series of similes that are inlaid like gems in the course of the story. Similes of such elaboration, pictured lovingly for their own beauty as well as for their imaginative bearing on the story, are called Homeric, after their earliest and greatest user. We feel their appropriateness here, not only because they relieve the strict simplicity of style, but because they harmonize with the mood of the poem, objective and impersonal, holding the reader's attention upon interests outside of the poet,—the events of the story itself, or the imaginative pictures accompanying them.

THE RAPE OF THE LOCK

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Though one of the most fanciful of poems, *The Rape of the Lock* tells a story that in its simple outline was taken directly from actual life. Lord Petre, a fashionable young Londoner, had offended Miss Arabella Fermor by cutting off a lock of her hair. A general quarrel followed, involving the families and friends of both parties. Finally John Caryll, friendly to both, interested Pope in the quarrel, suggesting that he write "something that would make this absurd vendetta explode in laughter." Pope took up the matter eagerly and produced in 1712—the poet's twenty-sixth year—*The Rape of the Lock,* publishing it in Lintot's *Miscellany* in its original form of two cantos. Two years later the poem was republished, enlarged to five cantos by the addition of a supernatural "machinery" of sylphs and gnomes, together with certain long passages like that on the game of Ombre. It is interesting to note that whereas Miss Fermor consented to the publication of the earlier form of

the poem, by the time the later form appeared she had become deeply annoyed at the notoriety in which the poem had involved her.

Pope styles *The Rape of the Lock* a "heroi-comical poem," and the phrase precisely describes it. Its effect is burlesque, but that effect is gained not so much by the extravagance of its exaggerations as by its whimsical shiftings from the serious to the trivial, from the solemn to the absurd. And the impression grows, as we read on in the poem, that what is true in the larger is true in the smaller details: the manner is always emphasizing the absurdity of the matter, and the matter is poking fun at the pomposity of the manner. In a small detail we have an instance of this—where a simple pair of steel scissors becomes "a glittering forfex." Of the more elaborate juxtaposition of ideas trifling and grave we have an example in the passage where the Sylph declares her oversight over Belinda to be just as careful, whether she

> Stain her honor, or her new brocade,
> Forget her prayers, or miss a masquerade,
> Or lose her heart, or necklace, at a ball.

Fully to appreciate the fusing of "heroic" and "comical" in its larger aspects requires some familiarity with characteristic features of the ancient epics of Homer and Virgil, —the invocation to the Muse, for example, or the double plot, part developed among men and women on the earth, part among the divinities interested in the terrestrial struggle. To these larger features should be added minor tricks of style that ape the classic practice, such as the formal "he spoke," after an elaborate speech, or the frequent use of such figures as the rhetorical question or personification. Frequently a line or two parodies a familiar quotation from Virgil, as where Belinda exclaims

> Happy! ah ten times happy had I been
> If Hampton Court these eyes had never seen!

Similarly, in

> Fays, Fairies, Genii, Elves and Demons, hear!

there is an echo from Milton's line from *Paradise Lost,*

> Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers.

These constant reminders of classic style provide the "heroic" element of the poem; the substance as constantly supplies the "comical."

The poem abounds in allusions, some classical, some contemporary. The former, such as the lines referring to the river Meander, or those touching on the story of Æneas and Dido, are readily recognized. More important than any of the others is the allusion at the end of the poem to the story of how Berenice, widow of Ptolemy III, cut off her hair and hung it as an offering in the temple of Mars, to find later that it had been taken up into the heavens and changed to a constellation bearing her name. The contemporary allusions are more interesting, however, for they put us in contact with much that is characteristic of the life and thought of the period. Some explanation will bring this out more clearly.

To the Queen, "great Anna," by whose name the literary period of Pope is known, allusion is made in the beginning of the third canto. Contemporary London appears in the reference to the Mall, or Pall Mall (pronounced *pell-mell*), a street frequented by fashionable society; to the locality within "the sound of Bow," the church bells heard in that scorned section of London devoted to trade; and to the Ring, a circular promenade resorted to by the aristocracy.

Within the exclusive circles of the beaux and belles we get a glimpse of the passing fashions of the day,—Ombre, the game of cards, whose intricacies we need not understand in order to follow the progress of the mock-heroic battle; the practice of tea and coffee drinking, recently introduced from abroad as a luxury for the wealthy class; the custom of celebrating royal birthdays with a ball, where might be seen the glittering "Birth-night Beau." Those fashionable ailments known as "the Megrims" (headache) and "the Vapors"—we should call them the blues—are traced to their home, "the gloomy cave of Spleen." And to the literature popular in society circles we find reference in the mention of "The New Atalanta," a story made up of gossip and scandal compromising people of rank, and in the allusion to the "vast French romances," one of which had been published in ten volumes of eight hundred pages each. Finally we meet with a figure familiar in his day and even since, John Partridge, a "ridiculous star-gazer," butt of the famous hoax devised by Swift in 1707.

Of the more personal matters dealt with in the poem,

brief mention has already been made. The personalities of "Belinda" and "the Baron" are of course obvious It is sufficient to add that "Plume" is Sir George Brown, who was, by the way, very angry at the figure he was made to cut in the poem; that "Thalestris" is his sister, Mrs. Morley; that "Shock" is Miss Fermor's dog; and that the "Caryll" mentioned in the third line of the first canto is the friend who suggested to Pope the subject for his poem.

Not alone does its substance, however, represent the time in which the poem was written: quite as characteristic is its verse form, known as the "heroic couplet." Each single line, taken as a unit, is of course the iambic pentameter of "blank verse," but the effect of a long passage is altogether different. Because the lines do not "run on," there is little of the flowing quality of the best blank verse: on the contrary, the tendency to make each line complete in itself favors the so-called "balanced" structure, as in the line

> While the fops envy, and the ladies stare;

and the succession of rhyming couplets tends to divide a passage into short units of two lines each:

> Now lap-dogs give themselves a rousing shake,
> And sleepless lovers just at twelve awake.

Since there is a minimum of naturally moving story and a maximum of epigrammatic flashes of wit, no small degree of the effectiveness of the poem is due to the happy appropriateness of its metrical form.

POEMS OF JOY IN LIFE

UP AT A VILLA—DOWN IN THE CITY

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The sub-title explains what might at first seem puzzling about the poem, by indicating that the local touches are Italian and that the point of view is that of an Italian "person of quality." The interest of the poem, therefore, lies not in the subject of it, but in the character of the speaker, and so explains its inclusion among the poems designated *Dramatic Lyrics.* In diction it illustrates in-

terestingly the desirability of approaching each poem from its own point of view. Its subject-matter bears some relation to that of Milton's *L'Allegro,* but a reader judging it by the standard of that poem would naturally be nonplused at the colloquial quality of its thought and language. To appreciate the genuine poetic value of both poems requires some imaginative breadth of view.

POEMS OF COURTSHIP AND LOVE

THE INDIAN SERENADE

(Page 182)

The title of this melodious song is of course purely fanciful, adding a touch of romantic charm to the musical lines. The use of the unfamiliar word "Champak," in the second stanza, is a similar touch, and it makes little difference whether we know that the flower is "a species of magnolia, a beautiful Indian tree, bearing orange-colored, highly fragrant flowers."

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY, LIKE THE NIGHT

(Page 183)

"These stanzas were written by Lord Byron on returning from a ballroom where he had seen Mrs. (now Lady) Wilmot Horton, the wife of his relation, the present Governor of Ceylon. On this occasion Mrs. Wilmot Horton had appeared in mourning with numerous spangles on her dress." —*T. Moore's note.*

YE BANKS AND BRAES O' BONNIE DOON

(Page 187)

The form given here is close to an early version of the poem. In order to adapt the song to the tune with which it is at present associated, Burns added two extra syllables to the alternate lines, and this later version is perhaps better known than the earlier. *Staw,* in the last stanza, means "stole."

JEAN

(Page 187)

The unfamiliar words in this poem, with their meanings, are as follows:

Airts: quarters *Row:* roll *Shaw:* small wood

SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT

(Page 189)

"Written at Town-End, Grasmere. The germ of this poem was four lines composed as a part of the verses on the Highland Girl. Though beginning in this way, it was written from my heart, as is sufficiently obvious."—*Wordsworth's note.*

The subject is clearly the poet's wife, Mary. It is a notable thing, thus to compress a whole personality, developing and maturing through a lifetime, into a short poem of thirty lines. Observe the use made of stanza divisions in accomplishing this.

THERE BE NONE OF BEAUTY'S DAUGHTERS

(Page 192)

The name that Byron gave to this song is *Stanzas for Music.* If we read the poem aloud, we discover the music that already exists in the words themselves,—not alone in the delicate meter, but in the sound of the vowel tones.

I TRAVELLED AMONG UNKNOWN MEN

(Page 194)

This was written in 1799, when Wordsworth was in Germany. It belonged to a series of poems written of one who has never been identified. Three others are given in this volume: *She Dwelt Among the Untrodden Ways, The Education of Nature,* and *A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal.*

JOHN ANDERSON

(Page 195)

The words which may give difficulty are:

brent: smooth *pow:* head *cantie:* cheerful *maun:* must

POEMS ON BEREAVEMENT AND DEATH

SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WAYS

(Page 197)

As indicated in the note on *I Travelled among Unknown Men,* this poem belongs to a series written in memory of an unknown "Lucy." It is a poem especially well worth learning by heart. It is characteristic of Wordsworth that his deepest feeling is expressed, not in extreme situation or extravagant diction, but through the implied story, the suggested emotion, and in simple, direct language, such as we find in this poem.

THE EDUCATION OF NATURE

(Page 198)

See note above. This poem contains one of the most direct statements of Wordsworth's belief that daily contact with the beautiful in nature has an important influence in molding character. He expresses it in the poet's way—showing how it applies to a particular situation that affects the human heart. The conception of the fifth stanza, particularly of its last two lines, is especially noteworthy.

A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL

(Page 199)

These stanzas conclude the series of poems addressed to "Lucy."

HIGHLAND MARY

(Page 200)

Burns himself wrote regarding this poem: "The foregoing song pleases myself, I think it is in my happiest manner." It has been pointed out that the "lyric structure" of the song is especially clear-cut. The first stanza is introductory; the second describes the meeting and the aspect of nature corresponding with the emotion. The third stanza passes directly to the next stage of the story, the parting—thought at first to be temporary, but proving in the event final; and the natural setting again reflects the mood. The feeling of pain and bereavement issues at last in repose, gained here by "the thought of her eternal presence in his memory."

Drumlie: muddy *birk:* birch

ELEGY

(Page 202)

This poem, together with *She Walks in Beauty Like the Night* and a number of others, were written, at the request of a friend of the poet, for a Selection of Hebrew Melodies, and were published with the music.

ELEGY, WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

(Page 203)

It is natural to think of this poem as a series of single lines and stanzas rich with quiet beauty and exquisitely phrased thought, lines here and stanzas there that we like to learn and remember and quote. It is right that this should be so; yet there is pleasure too in following the poem in its larger aspect, the development of the thought that binds the stanzas together into a single whole. After the first few stanzas of description the thought turns on the obscurity of those who lie buried in the humble churchyard, in contrast to those of distinction, whose bodies occupy the elaborate vaults within the church itself. All men, the great as well as the lowly, come to the grave in the end. But does the lack of worldly honor and display mean that these humbler people lacked the nobler emotions that actuated those

of distinguished career? On the contrary, the finest human spirit may have been represented among them,—the tyrant-hating courage of a Hampden, the imagination of a Milton, the zeal and energy of a Cromwell. But circumstances, which forbade the development of their powers in a world of action, put a limit too on the exercises of their faults. Yet the desire to be remembered after death, a natural desire common to us all, has caused these stones to be erected and inscribed, inviting a sympathetic tribute from those who are later to view them. He too, who is writing these very lines, will one day pass away, and others, recalling his quiet habits, will point out to the inquirer his tombstone, inscribed with an epitaph setting forth the quality of his life.

But whether this larger development of ideas appears readily or not, the beauty of phrase and stanza brings instant recognition, and needs not to be remarked. Yet even here there is an interesting observation to be made, that would be likely to escape one unless pointed out: the value of the passages lies not in the originality of their ideas, but in the perfectness of expression that Gray supplied for ideas that had long been current in earlier poetry. We know that Gray took great pains with the phrasing of his poems, and that he had this one in his possession about seven years before circumstances forced him to publish it. The result is that for ideas which other men had expressed more or less well, he supplied the finally perfect phrase, the phrase that we recognize and remember. One example will serve for all. Perhaps the most frequently quoted stanza of the Elegy is that beginning "Full many a gem." In his edition of selections from Gray, Professor W. L. Phelps has gathered the following forms in which the thought had appeared from the time of Milton down to that of Gray himself:

That, like to rich and various gems, inlay
The unadorned bosom of the deep.—*Milton.*

Like woodland flowers, that paint the desert glades,
And waste their sweets in unfrequented shades.—*Philips.*

Like beauteous flowers which vainly waste the scent
Of odors in unhaunted desarts.—*Chamberlayne.*

There is many a rich stone laid up in the bowels of the earth, many a fair pearl laid up in the bosom of the sea, that never was seen nor never shall be.—*Hall.*

There kept my charms conceal'd from mortal eye,
Like roses, that in deserts bloom and die.—*Pope.*

Since Gray's time the idea has always been associated with his expression of it, and it is unthinkable that any later poet should try to improve on what is so widely recognized as perfect.

In so far as it depends on its polished phrase and unerring line rather than on striking individuality of thought, the Elegy bears interesting resemblance to *Il Penseroso* and other poems of its kind. This is emphasized by a feature that Milton's poem and Gray's have in common: both were written by men who were close students of Latin poetry, and both make occasional use of words in their original Latin sense rather than in their commonly accepted English meaning. An example has been pointed out in Milton's line

Over her decent shoulders drawn.

Similar instances from Gray are as follows:

. . . *provoke* the silent dust,

in the Latin sense of "call forth";

. . . the *genial* current of the soul,

in the sense of "natural to one's genius or individuality";

Some *pious* drops. . . .

in the sense of "owed affection or duty," as of a child to its parents;

Fair *science* frowned not. . . .

in the sense of "knowledge in general." To the influence of Latin poetry may be ascribed as well Gray's tendency to personify abstractions, like penury and pride, and to concentrate into such a phrase as "storied urn and animated bust" a meaning which prose could express only by laborious explanation. But in this latter respect the Elegy stands between the highly concentrated phrasing of Milton's earlier poems and the simpler diction of the nineteenth century; in fact, the lines that are generally most loved and quoted

are those in which the phrasing is most natural and direct.

A few points in detail call for passing consideration. In the first stanza, the plural form "wind" suggests the plurality of the cattle, and avoids an unpleasant juxtaposition of sibilants. In the ninth stanza, it is the "hour" that is the subject of "awaits," not "the boast of heraldry" and all that accompany it; so the verb is singular. The reference to Milton in a later stanza is plain enough; the words about Cromwell show that Gray, like many of his age, did the great general scant justice; the mention of Hampden, however, the man who refused to pay the ship-money tax levied by Charles I, is wholly appreciative. The inverted structure of the following stanza is clear when we pass to the words "Their lot forbade." "Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife" modifies "wishes," of course, not "stray." It seems best to read the third stanza beyond in the sense of "For who e'er resigned this pleasing, anxious being, to become a prey to dumb forgetfulness?" The following stanza answers the question. The two stanzas beginning, "Hard by yon wood" are inscribed on the memorial to Gray erected near the famous churchyard at Stoke Poges, the scene of the poem.

The Elegy is the most famous of English poems written in the so-called "heroic couplet,"—iambic pentameter lines rhyming *a b a b*. The characteristic stanza is a complete unit in itself, as can be seen, for example, in the one beginning "The boast of heraldry." It is noteworthy, however, that in some cases the sense is carried from one stanza into the next. Oral reading discloses the metrical delicacy of the poem, as well as such occasional instances of sound echoing sense as we find in the last lines of the second stanza.

HESTER

(Page 208)

The "Hester" of the poem was a Quaker girl, Hester Savory, who died in her youth, shortly after her marriage. Though she was for a time a neighbor of Lamb's, and he was in the habit of seeing her frequently, he writes that he had never met her.

ELEGY ON THYRZA

(Page 209)

The name *Thyrza* appears in several of Byron's poems written about the time of this one. From the evidence of the poet's conversations and letters there is reason to believe that this is a fanciful name applied to a real, but unidentified person.

EVELYN HOPE

(Page 211)

We are not to understand this poem as in any sense autobiographic; yet we cannot fail to note in it that strong sense of personal immortality that is characteristic of Browning's utterances on the subject of death. There is a strong tendency to conclude, from the evidence of other poems, that Browning knew the secret only of vigorous, rude, and sometimes careless metrical effects; but a truer view appears when the tender delicacy of such poems as this becomes a part of the general impression.

GLEN-ALMAIN, THE NARROW GLEN

(Page 214)

Composed during a trip to Scotland on which the poet was accompanied by his sister Dorothy and, for a part of the way, by Coleridge. Ossian was a hero of early Scottish poetry, and it was on hearing of the legend that associated him with this glen that Wordsworth wrote the poem.

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

(Page 215)

This whole poem is a sustained figure of speech, for it was written after Lincoln's assassination, just as he had brought the Ship of State to port at the close of the Civil War. The note of personal grief is especially significant in view of the fact that Whitman, although an intense admirer of Lincoln, had never met him personally. It is when we read the poem aloud that we realize the effective contrast between the strong movement of the first long lines and the solemn tenderness of the short closing ones.

CORONACH

(Page 216)

The Coronach of the Highlanders is explained in the Cambridge edition of Scott's poems as "a wild expression of lamentation poured forth by the mourners over the body of a departed friend. When the words of it were articulate, they expressed the praises of the deceased, and the loss the clan would sustain by his death."

THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS

(Page 221)

One of those poems which, written while Wordsworth was in Germany, show where his thoughts were during the period.

ODE WRITTEN IN 1746

(Page 223)

The date in the title is of no importance: the poem might be associated with any soldiers' burying-ground. The interesting feature of the poem is its diction, typical of that which was highly in favor in the eighteenth century and has been much admired since.

POEMS ON THE WORLD OF NATURE

THE DAFFODILS

(Page 230)

It is pleasant to associate this poem with the following extract from the journal kept by Wordsworth's sister: "When we were in the woods beyond Gowbarrow Park we saw a few daffodils close to the water-side. We fancied that the sea had floated the seeds ashore, and that the little colony had so sprung up. But as we went along there were more, and yet more; and at last under the boughs of the trees we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore. . . . I never saw daffodils so beautiful . . . they

tossed and reeled and danced as if they verily laughed with the wind that blew upon them over the lake." Lines 21 and 22, the "two best," as he said, were suggested to him by his wife, Mary.

TO THE DAISY

(Page 231)

The poem is typical of Wordsworth's poems on natural objects, revealing an imaginative attitude that never loses sight of the simple beauty or worthiness of the object itself. It will be remembered that it is the English daisy, fringed with red underneath, that was familiar to Wordsworth. The succession of similes recalls Shelley's *To a Skylark.*

THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS

(Page 232)

In order to understand this poem it is necessary to know how the nautilus occupies successively larger chambers as its spiral shell grows. The dictionary gives a cross-section cut illustrating the matter.

TO A MOUSE

(Page 234)

The address to the field mouse, with its accompanying description, whimsically tender though it be, is not complete until the idea is applied to the poet himself. The change is not, however, unprepared for: the last part of the second stanza has implied a bond holding mouse and man in mutual sympathy. The unfamiliar words are so many in this poem that it is best to put them down alphabetically.

Agley: awry
Bickerin': speedy
Big: build
Brattle: scamper
But: without
Coulter: plough-share
Cranreuch: hoar-frost
Daimen: occasional
Foggage: moss
Hald: property
Icker: ear of corn
Laith: loath
Lane: alone
Lave: remainder
Pattle: stick for breaking clods
Snell: biting
Thole: suffer
Thrave: twenty-four sheaves
Whyles: sometimes

TO A SKYLARK

(Page 235)

Mrs. Shelley tells of the circumstances occasioning this poem: "In the spring we spent a week or two near Leghorn, borrowing the house of some friends, who were absent on a journey to England. It was on a beautiful summer evening while wandering among the lanes, whose myrtle hedges were the bowers of the fireflies, that we heard the carolling of the skylark, which inspired one of the most beautiful of his poems."

Of the stimulating imaginative quality of this poem, its passion and its exquisite music, nothing need be said. But since we are accustomed to think of it as a series of separate stanzas, it will help us to get the full significance of the whole poem if we note how the stanzas are related together. After the invocation and description come a series of imaginative comparisons beginning, it is significant, with that of the poet singing to the indifferent world. Then with the thirteenth stanza begins a wistful inquiry as to the secret of the bird's unconquerable joyousness, with a sad reflection as to the pain in man's own life. By the last stanza the two ideas are brought into one—the yearning of the poet toward adequate expression, and the triumphant eloquence of the skylark's song. This disposition of the poet to identify himself with the spirit in nature to which he sings we connect, of course, with the noteworthy example of it in the *Ode to the West Wind.*

TO THE SKYLARK

(Page 239)

A comparison of the poem with Shelley's more famous one on the same subject brings out the fact that whereas Shelley's passionate spirit identifies itself finally with the "clear keen joyance" of the songster, Wordsworth seizes on another and more impersonal aspect of the skylark's habits.

TO THE CUCKOO

(Page 240)

"Composed in the orchard at Town-End, Grasmere, 1804."—*Wordsworth's note.*

We in this country, though we are not accustomed to hear the cuckoo, will nevertheless not find it hard to imagine its mysterious, unreal call.

NATURE AND THE POET

(Page 244)

This poem was written shortly after Wordsworth's brother, John, lost his life bravely on a ship he was commanding. This will explain the associations brought to the poet's mind by seeing a picture of a stormy sea.

THE INVITATION

(Page 246)

The invitation is to Mrs. Williams, one of Shelley's circle of friends during his years in Italy. The families were on terms of affectionate intimacy, and it is to the same friend that Shelley addressed the lines entitled *To a Lady, with a Guitar.* It is to be noted that the next poem, *The Recollection,* is addressed to the same friend, and takes up the same excursion, or a similar one, in retrospect.

THE RECOLLECTION

(Page 248)

See note to preceding poem, *The Invitation.* The inscription with which Shelley accompanied the lines said that they were "not to be opened unless you are alone or with Williams."

TO THE HIGHLAND GIRL OF INVERSNEYDE

(Page 252)

This was written after an incident of the tour of Scotland that Wordsworth took with his sister in the year 1803. The Journal, kept by his sister Dorothy, has this to say of it: "When beginning to descend the hill toward Loch Lomond we overtook two girls, who told us we could not cross the ferry until evening, for the boat was gone with a number of people to church. One of the girls was exceedingly beauti-

ful: and the figures of both of them, in gray plaids falling to their feet, their faces only being uncovered, excited our attention before we spoke to them. I think I never heard the English language sound more sweetly than from the mouth of the elder of these girls, as she stood at the gate answering our inquiries, her face flushed with the rain."

THE REAPER

(Page 254)

Another poem that had its origin in the experiences of the tour through Scotland. That Wordsworth does not try to answer the questions that he suggests to our imaginations, or point a lesson from them, indicates fine literary feeling: he leaves us with the strong sense of romantic charm that he himself felt.

POEMS OF LOYALTY AND PATRIOTISM

YE MARINERS OF ENGLAND

(Page 257)

In his early manhood Campbell heard an old ballad called *Ye Gentlemen of England* sung at the house of a friend in Scotland. A little later, when there was a rumor of a war with Russia, he was roused to take the older ballad as his basis and compose this ringing ode to England's naval prowess.

BANNOCKBURN: ROBERT BRUCE'S ADDRESS TO HIS ARMY

(Page 259)

Like many songs by Burns, this was composed to fit a familiar air. In a letter accompanying the poem, Burns tells how the old tune—called "Hey tutti taitie"—"has often filled my eyes with tears." He then goes on: "There is a tradition, which I have met with in many places in Scotland—that it was Robert Bruce's March at the battle of Ban-

nockburn. This thought in my yesternight's evening-walk, warmed me to a pitch of enthusiasm on the theme of Liberty and Independence which I threw into a kind of Scots Ode, fitted to the air, that one might suppose to be the gallant royal Scot's address to his heroic followers on that eventful morning." In the Battle of Bannockburn (1314) Bruce, with about thirty thousand followers, totally defeated the army of Edward II, of about one hundred thousand men, destroying nearly a third of the English army.

HOME THOUGHTS FROM THE SEA

(Page 260)

Browning composed these lines as he was passing Cape Trafalgar and Gibraltar and recalled the victory of Nelson over the combined fleets of Spain and France.

THE LOST LEADER

(Page 261)

The poem expresses the contemptuous indignation felt by a high-spirited young man when he finds a noble cause forsaken by a distinguished and once cherished leader. The growing conservatism of Wordsworth was felt by some of the younger men to be such a defection; and though Browning confesses that the older poet's attitude was a deep disappointment to him, nevertheless he distinctly denies having tried to make this a real picture of the man Wordsworth.

CAVALIER TUNES

(Page 262)

Even reading aloud would hardly bring out the strong sense of accent in these ringing lines: they suggest the lusty shouting of a chorus of men, with perhaps some banging on the table to accentuate the rhythm. These were the riotous adversaries pitted against the earnest Roundheads of Macaulay's *The Battle of Naseby.*

POEMS ON THE PROBLEM OF LIFE

A MAN'S A MAN FOR A' THAT

(Page 269)

This song (for it was sung to a popular air of the day) was written in 1795, at a time when the influence of the French Revolution was strong in England as well as on the Continent. That influence was manifested in English literature in the form of a "revolt" from eighteenth century standards, and one expression of this was the literature of Democracy, of which this lyric is an early example. There is no more ringing declaration of the worth of the individual soul, and so it has become the rallying cry of protest against the artificial claims of social prestige. The words that require explanation are as follows:

Birkie: forward fellow
Coof: booby
Grec: prize
Hoddin: coarse woolen cloth
Mauna fa': must not attempt

TO MARGUERITE

(Page 271)

This is one of a series of poems grouped under the title *Switzerland.* It takes up the idea, begun earlier in the series, of human isolation, soul separated from soul, and gives it striking expression in the figure of the island. The last line is a notable instance of concentrated descriptive power.

WHERE LIES THE LAND?

(Page 271)

Wordsworth has a sonnet beginning with the first line of this poem, which probably suggested the idea to Clough. It is characteristic of Clough to turn the natural query about a literal ship into speculation upon the uncertain journey of our mysterious life. Since the second and third stanzas bring out the deeper nature of Clough's question, the repe-

tition of the first inquiry comes with greatly increased significance.

THANATOPSIS

(Page 273)

It is hard to realize that this poem, perfect expression of a certain "view of death," was written by a boy of seventeen. Dana, to whom the editor of the *North American Review* showed it before publishing it in 1817, declared that the editor must have been deceived,—that no one could write such poems on this side of the Atlantic. It should be noted, however, that the last lines, for which the poem is best known, were added ten years after the first draft of the poem.

UP-HILL

(Page 276)

The serenity of this allegory of the transition from earth to heaven is expressed in the quiet simplicity of its diction. Though the lines are irregular in length, the metrical delicacy of their accent is revealed when they are read aloud.

PROSPICE

(Page 276)

Browning here takes his title from the Latin word meaning "to look forward," and attaches it to a poem which, written soon after Mrs. Browning's death, looks forward to the time when he himself shall "pay glad life's arrears." The vigor of meter that marks the first part of the poem undergoes, it will be noted, an appropriate change near the end, where the stress of conflict leads to peaceful reunion.

REQUIEM

(Page 277)

These lines were written by Stevenson in anticipation of his own death, and are now carved on the boulder that marks his grave, high on the crest of a Samoan mountain.

POEMS IN SONNET FORM

BY THE SEA

(Page 278)

"This was composed on the beach, near Calais, in the autumn of 1802."—*Wordsworth's note.*

As one reads the sonnet aloud, one is struck with its metrical beauties. The feeling of quiet spaciousness and calm is increased by the long syllables coming together—"broad sun," "broods o'er"—and by their vowel tones; the mind is aroused by the sudden metrical change beginning "Listen"; and there is force in the pause before the word "everlastingly." But the final impression of the poem comes from the delicate, solemn beauty of its idea, the belief in divine influences guiding the intuitions of childish life. We find, of course, the fuller statement of this belief in the *Ode on Intimations of Immortality.*

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER

(Page 278)

When Keats was about twenty, he and his friend C. C. Clarke borrowed a folio copy of Chapman's translation of Homer, and sat up together till daylight, reading it, "Keats shouting with delight as some passage of especial energy struck his imagination. At ten o'clock the next morning, Mr. Clarke found the sonnet on his breakfast-table."

Structurally it is a perfect example of the so-called "Italian" sonnet (see dictionary), with its division into octave and sestet emphasized by its characteristic rime-scheme. That it was Balboa, not Cortez, that discovered the Pacific disturbs not at all the imaginative effect of its wonderful sestet.

IF THOU DOST LOVE ME

(Page 279)

This sonnet, and the one following, are selected from the series of so-called *Sonnets from the Portuguese.* The title is merely a thin literary disguise, under cover of which

Elizabeth Barrett addresses Robert Browning in the days of their courtship. The passionate earnestness of feeling, it will be noticed, breaks down the divisions of octave and sestet, and sweeps in a single wave from the first line of the sonnet to the last.

A CONSOLATION

(Page 281)

This and the following sonnet are taken from the series of one hundred and fifty-four written by Shakspere. The rime-scheme of the so-called "Shaksperian" sonnet, it will be observed, differs from that of the "Italian" sonnet, in that the former has three separate quatrains and a concluding couplet.

ON HIS BLINDNESS

(Page 282)

This sonnet was written not long after 1652, when Milton became blind at the age of forty-four.

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT

(Page 283)

The massacre upon which this sonnet was written took place in Switzerland in 1655, at the instigation of the Prince of Piedmont. The victims were the body of Protestants known as Waldenses. Milton's poem, therefore, was not alone an outcry against the physical horrors of the crime, but a burst of moral indignation against the spiritual outrage that had been committed. By the triple tyrant Milton means the Pope, with his three-tiered crown, and by the Babylonian woe the Church of Rome, considered by Milton's party to be the doomed Babylon of the Apocalypse (Cp. *Revelation,* chap. xvii and xviii.)

ENGLAND AND SWITZERLAND, 1802

(Page 283)

In 1802 Napoleon overcame Switzerland, and deprived her of her freedom. Now in 1807 he was planning to do the

same with England. In the light of this it is easy to see the significance of setting the two voices of freedom side by side and the intense patriotic devotion underlying the comparison.

BRIGHT STAR! WOULD I WERE STEADFAST AS THOU ART

(Page 284)

When Keats was setting out for Italy on what he knew was his last voyage, and the ship had been beating about the Channel for a fortnight, he landed for a brief respite on the Dorsetshire coast. "The bright beauty of the day and the scene," writes his biographer, "revived the poet's drooping heart, and the inspiration remained with him for some time even after his return to the ship. It was then that he composed that sonnet of solemn tenderness. . . . I know of nothing written afterwards."

THE TERROR OF DEATH

(Page 284)

Written in 1818, soon after the completion of *Endymion.* Contrasting the sonnet on Chapman's Homer, we note that this follows the structure of the Shaksperian sonnet, the introduction filling the three quatrains and the conclusion the couplet.

THE INNER VISION

(Page 286)

The teaching—known as transcendentalism—that the inner life has a reality and importance beyond the outer, as shown in this poem, has the greater interest for us because Wordsworth reached it after a period during which the influences of materialistic belief bore strongly upon him.

ON THE CASTLE OF CHILLON

(Page 288)

Though this poem was prefixed to Byron's longer narrative poem, *The Prisoner of Chillon,* it was written later,

after the poet had learned of the story of Bonnivard, a former prisoner of the Castle. In the early sixteenth century Bonnivard stood out for the liberty of the people of Geneva, and in consequence suffered exile for ten years, and imprisonment in this dungeon for six.

UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE

(Page 288)

An interesting example of description for its own sake, not, as is more usual with Wordsworth, leading to a reflective passage. The sonnet was written on the roof of a coach as Wordsworth was leaving for France.

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC

(Page 289)

The loss of freedom by Venice calls forth this tribute to her former glories, but is too remote to have the same effect as the overthrow of Switzerland's liberty (see sonnet on England and Switzerland, 1802). References to historic circumstances in the earlier life of Venice occur in the first part of the poem, that of the eighth line referring to a ceremony, "marrying the Adriatic," instituted, after a victory in 1177, to symbolize the city's maritime supremacy.

WITHIN KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE

(Page 289)

The "Royal Saint" was Henry VI, who founded the college and began to build the chapel, but left it incomplete, to be finished in a later reign. It is a late Gothic building, with a beauty of design and an elaborateness of ornament that has made it the most admired and famous of college chapels.

DESIDERIA

(Page 290)

"This was in fact suggested by my daughter Catharine long after her death."—*Wordsworth's note.*

LONDON, 1802

(Page 290)

This and the two following sonnets were composed on the return of Wordsworth from France, where he had been impressed by the earnestness of the Revolution and the desolation it had caused. The "vanity and parade" of his own country impressed him in contrast, and the first two of the sonnets are a strong expression of his feeling.

THE SAME

(Page 291)

It is interesting to notice the effect of putting the negative part of the poem first, and reserving for the end the strong, uplifting characterization of Milton's noble qualities. The "study" of such a sonnet as this consists in reading it again and again.

WHEN I HAVE BORNE IN MEMORY WHAT HAS TAMED

(Page 291)

From the feeling of disappointment and distrust of the two preceding sonnets comes the reaction expressed in this, the final sonnet of the series.

POEMS IN PLAYFUL MOOD

THE LAST LEAF

(Page 296)

One of the author's earliest poems "suggested by the appearance of a venerable relic of the Revolution, said to be one of the party who threw the tea overboard in Boston Harbor. He was a fine monumental specimen in his cocked hat and knee breeches, with his buckled shoes and his sturdy cane."

POEMS IN A MINOR KEY

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

(Page 313)

It is natural to associate the exceptional effectiveness of this poem with its metrical qualities. Equally interesting is it to observe the use of monosyllables of native English origin, contrasted with the exceptional soft-toned words of foreign origin—" voice," " vanished."

THE FLIGHT OF LOVE

(Page 315)

One of the last of Shelley's poems, written during his residence in Italy, and published after his death. Its imagery and strange melody express the fluctuations of a mood rather than the development of a thought. The unusual metrical effect of alternating different kinds of lines is best brought out when we read the poems aloud. Compare the effect of the same device in *One Word Is Too Often Profaned.*

YOUTH AND AGE

(Page 317)

It was on hearing of the news of the death of the Duke of Dorset, a former schoolfellow of the poet's, that Byron wrote this poem. He later speaks of the verses as " the *truest,* though the most melancholy, I ever wrote."

THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN

(Page 320)

" This arose out of my observation of the affecting music of these birds hanging in this way in the London streets during the freshness and stillness of the Spring morning."—*Wordsworth's note.*

SIMON LEE, THE OLD HUNTSMAN

(Page 321)

One of the earliest of Wordsworth's poems, in which he was commending to the public taste a simpler diction and word order than had been commonly found in contemporary English verse. The poem had its origin in an actual occurrence; indeed, Wordsworth records that the expression "I dearly love their voice" was word for word from the old huntsman's own lips.

STANZAS WRITTEN IN DEJECTION NEAR NAPLES

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From such a poem as this our conception of lyric poetry grows clearer. It has its beginning in personal emotion, but its choice of the significant aspects of the feeling, and the sympathetic beauty of its expression, make it stand for experience in which we can all share. The *Golden Treasury* version of this poem leaves out the last stanza as Shelley wrote it, and so it is added here.

Some might lament that I were cold,
As I when this sweet day is gone,
Which my lost heart, too soon grown old,
Insults with this untimely moan;
They might lament, for I am one
Whom men love not,—and yet regret,
Unlike this day, which, when the sun
Shall on its stainless glory set,
Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in memory yet.

A DREAM OF THE UNKNOWN

(Page 325)

Of the line beginning "And wild roses" Mr. Palgrave says: "Our language has perhaps no line modulated with more subtle sweetness."

A DIRGE

(Page 329)

Mr. Stopford Brooke quotes, as illustrating the force of the word *knells,* these lines from *Adonais*:

As the last cloud of an expiring storm
Whose thunder is its knell,

and notes how all things are spoken of as sounding, the wind, the cloud, the caves, the sea, and even the trees, straining their branches in the storm.

POEMS ON THE IMAGINATION

THE REALM OF FANCY

(Page 331)

These lines were inclosed by Keats in a letter to his brother, in 1819, and they were published the next year. The sensitive, impressionable quality of Keats's mind is indicated by the strong influence upon his writing of the older poets he had been reading. It is interesting, therefore, to verify Mr. Palgrave's comment: "I know no other poem which so closely rivals the richness and melody,—and that in this very difficult and rarely attempted metre,—of Milton's *L'Allegro and Penseroso.*"

KUBLA KHAN

(Page 334)

With reference to this poem Coleridge tells us how he fell asleep, in the summer of 1797, from the effect of an anodyne as he was reading a description from Purchas's *Pilgrimage,* and how during this sleep the images and words of a poem seemed to come to him of their own accord. On awaking he took pen and paper and eagerly wrote down the lines here preserved; but after being interrupted by a matter of business he was able to retain only a "vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision," and so the poem remains "a fragment." It is small wonder, then, that *Kubla Khan* seems strange to us, for the subtly melodious lines are controlled by no evident purpose, but seem rather to subserve the whim of shifting romantic suggestion. A specially noteworthy example of the haunting, intangible charm are the three lines beginning "A savage place!" The passage from Purchas, which Coleridge refers to, is as follows:

"In Xamdu did Cublai Can build a stately Palace, encompassing sixteene miles of plaine ground with a wall, wherein are fertile Meddowes, pleasant Springs, delightfull Streames, and all sorts of beasts of chase & game, and in the middest thereof a sumptuous house of pleasure."

THE MERMAID TAVERN

(Page 336)

The Mermaid Tavern was the famous inn at which Shakspere, Ben Jonson, and other dramatists of the time used to meet frequently.

TO A LADY, WITH A GUITAR

(Page 337)

To understand the subtle fancy of this poem requires a knowledge of the circumstances of its composition and some familiarity with Shakspere's *Tempest*. Ariel, the fairy servant of the ancient Prospero, on his enchanted island, had once, it will be recalled, been imprisoned in a cloven pine, until released by the magician. So the spirit of music, Shelley tells his friend Mrs. Williams, is captive in the wood of the guitar, her prisoner now, to follow her commands. But Ariel is not merely an impersonal spirit: Shelley imaginatively identifies the fairy with himself, bringing the guitar to Miranda, the lovely daughter of his old master Prospero. So his fancy plays over the poem—in the first half expressing Shelley's solicitous regard for the happiness and welfare of his friend, in the second the power of her sympathetic spirit to divine the delicate secrets hidden in musical harmony.

The guitar which accompanied the poem is still preserved in the Bodleian Library at Oxford; and an interesting account by Trelawney comes down to us of how Shelley composed the poem, crouched under a fallen pine by a forest pool, scrawling down his words in an absorbed reverie.

L'ALLEGRO and *IL PENSEROSO*

(Pp. 339 and 344)

The probable date of these poems is 1632, when Milton was twenty-four years of age. In them we find, not the

austere man whom we associate with *Paradise Lost,* but a man with a full sense of joy ripening into thoughtful meditation. In fact, it seems natural to interpret the poems as a balancing between the two ideals of life that the poet was setting before himself,—that of carefree, innocent mirth, the mood of youth, and that of pensive, sober meditation, appropriate to a maturer age. The title of the first poem, *The Cheerful Man* (*L'Allegro*), admits of no misunderstanding. But the invocation of the second is likely to deceive us, and we need to remind ourselves that *Il Penseroso* means, not a melancholy man, but merely one of thoughtful, meditative nature.

As we read the poems, we soon find a key to their structure,—the successive periods of a day spent according to the two ideals of life. But the day is a poetic, not a literal day: it is not restricted to the experience of a single individual: the scene changes freely from the country to the city, whenever a typical experience of pleasure is to be found. If, then, we meet the poet in his own imaginative mood, it becomes a pleasure to follow the successive phases of each day's occupation, and to observe how they contrast each with the other, part by part. In that same realm of imagination it becomes natural to find Milton ranging at will from classic mythology to Christian traditions and to the new creations of his own fancy: the magic spell is on us, and we follow unquestioning where he leads.

One thing that often stands in the way of a natural enjoyment of the poem is the number of classical allusions with which it is studded. Of course, when the allusions are familiar, the flashes of association that they call up enrich the value of the poem for us, and it is indeed only when we so read them that we get their true effect. Yet after all, it is not in the allusions that the greatest value of the poem lies; it is in such lines as those characterizing Shakspere that we take the deepest pleasure.

A word finally as to the versification: We recognize at once the prevailing iambic in which the poem is written; but we notice as well the places where irregularities of meter, with trochaic effect, give variety and spontaneity to the lines. It is interesting to observe, in our reading aloud, where these changes come, and how they relate themselves to the emotional mood of the passage.

In the notes that follow, only those few details appear that seem really to need explanation. For the rest, we need to

keep our imagination keenly on the alert,—our visual imagination to picture such a scene as is given in the lines

> Towers and battlements it sees
> Bosomed high in tufted trees,

and our spiritual imagination to respond to such expressive lines as these:

> There, held in holy passion still,
> Forget thyself to marble.

L'ALLEGRO

(Page 339)

1-3. This personification of Melancholy, the indication of her relationship to the three-headed watchdog of the nether world, and of her birthplace on the banks of the river of Hades is all, of course, an invention of Milton's fancy, typical of those with which he inlays his poetry.

10. *Cimmerian*: according to Homer, a race living far to the west, in perpetual darkness and mist.

12. *Euphrosyne*: one of the Graces. Of the two theories of parentage suggested, it is easy to see why the second should commend itself more to Milton. *Yclept*: an archaism meaning "called."

29. *Hebe*: the cup-bearer to the Gods, typifying eternal youth.

36. *Mountain nymph*: The whereabouts of Liberty's natural home is happily suggested.

45. *Then to come*: It seems best to regard this as parallel with "to hear" above, meaning that Allegro comes, and, through the window, bids good-morrow to one of his household or, perhaps, to the world of nature about him.

In spite of: equivalent to *in despite of* (in order to spite) sorrow.

55. *Hoar hill*: The indication of hoar-frost sets the season late—good hunting weather.

67. *Tells his tale*: Besides the obvious meaning, the expression often signifies "counts the number" of sheep—a natural and profitable morning occupation.

71. *Lawns*: open fields. *Fallows*: land left ploughed, but without crops.

80. *Cynosure*: originally the constellation of the Lesser

Bear, by which sailors steered; then, by a figure, anything that attracted the gaze and admiration of the many.

83-8. *Corydon, etc.:* The four names in this group, the first two of shepherds, the last two of shepherdesses, have been traditional in pastoral poetry since the time of Theocritus.

91. *Secure*: has here the earlier meaning of "care-free."

94. *Rebeck*: a rude kind of fiddle.

102. *Faery Mab*: the mischievous sprite whose playful tricks on the junkets (cream cheese) of the country wenches are the subject of many a story.

104-14. *Friar's lantern, etc.:* Now one of the men takes up the tale, and tells of being led by Friar Rush, or Jack-o'-lantern, to a spot where Robin Goodfellow performs prodigious feats for the reward of a bowl of cream, before having to beat a hasty retreat at dawn. *Lubber fiend* here means no more than a kind of clownish Brownie house-servant. *Crop-full*: stomach-stuffed.

120. *Weeds*: garments in general, according to older usage.

125-30. *Hymen*: the God of the marriage feast, with his appropriate companions.

132. *Learned sock*: the low slipper (Latin *soccus*) worn by the actor in comedy, contrasted with the high boot, or buskin, of the tragic stage. Compare *Il Penseroso,* line 102.

136. *Lydian airs*: tender and voluptuous melodies, as contrasted with the sprightly Phrygian music or the majestic Dorian. The melody of sound in this passage (135-144), so exquisitely following the sense, peculiarly rewards a sympathetic reading aloud.

145-50. *Orpheus, etc.:* The story of Orpheus, whose music prevailed on Pluto to release his dead wife from Hades, is referred to again in *Il Pensoroso,* lines 105-8.

IL PENSEROSO

(Page 344)

3. *Bestead*: satisfy, profit.

4. *Toys*: trifling vanities.

6. *Fond*: here, "foolish," according to earlier usage.

10. *Pensioners*: an honorary body-guard. *Morpheus*: the God of dreams. This line is a good example of Milton's most concentrated diction, each word requiring sympathetic comprehension before the significance of the phrase can be grasped in its entirety.

18. *Prince Memnon's sister*: Milton transfers the peerless beauty of a traditional hero, Memnon, to a sister, whom he seems to have invented.

19. *Starred Ethiop queen*: Cassiopeia, whose boasts that the beauty of her daughter Andromache surpassed that of the Nereids brought vengeance from the God of the Sea. The fact that both mother and daughter were afterwards placed among the constellations accounts for the epithet "starred."

23-30. *Bright-haired Vesta, etc.*: This passage assigns the birth of Melancholy to the age of primitive innocence in the world, before Jove displaced Saturn as King. The purpose is evidently to attribute calm and sanctity to the Goddess. *Ida's inmost grove*: in a mountain in Crete.

33. *Grain*: used in Milton's time for a rich purple dye.

35. *Stole*: evidently here a kind of shawl. *Cipres lawn*: a kind of fine black crêpe.

36. *Decent*: used here in Latin sense of "comely."

52-4. Professor Masson's explanation of the passage is as follows: "A daring use of the great vision, in *Ezekiel,* chap. x, of the sapphire throne, the wheels of which were four cherubs, while in the midst of them and underneath the throne was a burning fire. Milton ventures to *name* one of these cherubs who guide the fiery wheelings of the visionary throne."

55. *Hist*: a coined verb, in the imperative, expressing effectively a hushed summons.

56. *Philomel*: the nightingale, bird of melancholy.

59. *Cynthia checks her dragon yoke*: Another mythological invention of the poet's, for though other Goddesses did drive dragon-teams, Cynthia (Diana) did not.

74. *Curfeu*: from the French *couvre-feu,* to extinguish the lights, at the signal of a bell in the early evening.

83. *Bellman's drowsy charm*: this lines pictures, with wonderful concentration, the sleepy night-watchman, with his monotonously chanted verses to ward off evil, as he goes his rounds from door to door

87. *Outwatch the Bear*: sit up studying till the Bear, the constellation that never sets, fades away in the daylight.

88. *Thrice great Hermes*: Hermes Trismegistus (thrice great), a mythical Egyptian philosopher and magician, supposed to have written various mediæval books on astrology.

88-9. *Unsphere The spirit of Plato*: call back his spirit

from the sphere it inhabits in the other world, to give aid in philosophical studies.

93-6. *Those demons, etc.*: The mediæval traditions, associating the spirits, or "demons," of the four elements (line 94) with the movements of the planets, are here referred to.

98-100. *In sceptered pall, etc.*: The scepter and the pall, or cloak worn by the actor in tragedy, would be associated with the famous Greek tragedies based on favorite mythological stories,—of the royal house of Thebes, of the descendants of Pelops, of the heroes of the Trojan War.

102. *Buskined stage:* See note to *L'Allegro,* line 132.

104. *Musæus*: son of Orpheus, and reputed to be the earliest of Greek poets.

105-8. *Orpheus, etc.:* See note *L'Allegro,* lines 145-50.

110-15. *The story of Cambuscan bold*: the "Tartar king" who, with the others mentioned in the passage, appeared in Chaucer's unfinished *Squire's Tale. Virtuous ring* means one of magic properties.

120. *More is meant than meets the ear*: as is the case in allegorical poems, such as Spenser's *Faerie Queene.*

124. *The Attic Boy*: Cephalus, the youthful lover of Aurora.

134. *Sylvan*: Sylvanus, the God of fields and forests.

147-50. *Strange, mysterious dreams:* The Cambridge edition of Milton's poems offers the following paraphrase of this passage: "Let some mysterious dream move to and fro at the wings of sleep, unrolling its pictures, until they fall upon my eyelids."

156. *Pale*: an inclosure, in this case of a cloister used by students.

157. *Embowed:* arched.

159. *Storied*: with pictures illustrating Bible stories.

170. *Spell*: reflect, thoughtfully upon.

POEMS IN THE FORM OF ODES

ODE TO AUTUMN

(Page 349)

Keats writes from Winchester, September 22, 1819: "How beautiful the season is now—How fine the air. A temperate sharpness about it. . . . I never liked stubble fields

so much as now—Aye, better than the chilly green of the spring. Somehow, a stubble-field looks warm in the same way that some pictures look warm. This struck me so much in my Sunday walk that I composed upon it."

ODE TO THE WEST WIND

(Page 352)

From Shelley himself we learn under what circumstances he came to compose this ode: "This poem was conceived and chiefly written in the wood that skirts the Arno, near Florence, and on a day when that tempestuous wind, whose temperature is at once mild and animating, was collecting the vapors which pour down the autumnal rains. They began, as I foresaw, at sunset with a violent tempest of hail and rain, attended by that magnificent thunder and lightning peculiar to the Cisalpine regions.

"The phenomenon alluded to at the conclusion of the third stanza is well known to naturalists. The vegetation at the bottom of the sea, of rivers, and of lakes, sympathizes with that of the land in the change of seasons, and is consequently influenced by the winds which announce it."

The construction of this ode, which is by some considered perfect beyond that of any other English lyric, repays careful study. Each stanza we find to be made up of three-line units linked together by rime,—the *terza rima* used by Dante, —each stanza being closed, however, by a couplet. The invocation, covering three stanzas, is not only descriptive but interpretative, and we note especially at the end of the first stanza the power of the west wind not simply to destroy, but in destroying to preserve life for its resurrection in the spring. With the fourth stanza the ideas of the invocation are applied personally, but in a conditional, tentative way, referring back to the three forces of wind, cloud, and wave. The fifth stanza completes the identification of the poet with the spirit of the west wind in intense, passionate lines, and then, returning to the idea of spring resurrection, speaks the hope of a future for his own message to mankind.

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

(Page 354)

Keats's biographer, Lord Houghton, tells of how in the spring of 1819 a nightingale built her nest in a near-by tree.

One morning after breakfast Keats went out under a plum tree, and spent two or three hours composing the first draft of this poem. The death of his brother during the previous winter had greatly affected him, and Haydon, connecting that fact with this ode, writes: ". . . as we were one evening walking in the Kilburn meadows he repeated it to me, before he put it to paper, in a low, tremulous undertone which affected me extremely."

The subtle, intangible power of this poem comes best to us when we read it aloud sympathetically. We do not lose, then, the sounds, exquisitely appropriate to the sense, of such a line as the seventh of the second stanza, or the melancholy effect of the successive long syllables of line five, stanza three. In many a phrase Keats expresses with final perfection an intangibly delicate idea; never more happily, however, than in the last two lines of the seventh stanza, picturing the world where lives the spirit of Romance.

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

(Page 357)

Composed in the spring of 1819, four years after the sonnet on Chapman's Homer. The specimens of Greek art known to Keats were the Elgin marbles in the British Museum, works that Keats, by nature, was peculiarly fitted to appreciate. In the garden of Holland House there is a vase of weather-beaten marble that, it is thought, may have been the inspiration of this poem.

ODE TO DUTY

(Page 358)

"This ode is on the model of Gray's *Ode to Adversity*, which is copied from Horace's *Ode to Fortune*. Many and many a time have I been twitted by my wife and sister for having forgotten this dedication of myself to the stern lawgiver."—*Wordsworth's note.*

At first sight it might seem that the moral ideas contained in this ode are not appropriate for poetry, but that they belong rather in a prose essay. Yet this is after all only a superficial conclusion, for Wordsworth is not merely explaining an abstract theory of duty: the matter touches him deeply, and his feeling is stronger even than his thought.

This it is—the sense of personal emotion—that marks this ode as essentially a lyric poem. Though the invocation is abstract, even that is full of imaginative suggestiveness. The personal element enters frankly with the fourth stanza, and by the end of the poem has developed into intense earnestness of feeling.

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY

(Page 360)

"This was composed during my residence at Town-End, Grasmere. Two years at least passed between the writing of the first stanzas and the remaining part. To the attentive and competent reader the whole sufficiently explains itself; but there may be no harm in adverting here to particular feelings or *experiences* of my own mind on which the structure of the poem partly rests. Nothing was more difficult for me in childhood than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being. I have said elsewhere—

> A simple child,
> That lightly draws its breath
> And feels its life in every limb,
> What should it know of death!—

But it was not so much from feelings of animal vivacity that *my* difficulty came as from a sense of the indomitableness of the Spirit within me. I used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and almost to persuade myself that, whatever might become of others, I should be translated, in something of the same way, to heaven."—*Wordsworth's note.*

The poem is elaborate in structure, and can be read with greatest pleasure after we have formed a clear notion of the ideas on which it is based. Connecting the vivid imagination of childhood with the idea of the soul's immortality, Wordsworth passes in review the successive stages of man's development from infancy to maturity, showing at each point the relation that he has or ought to have to the immortal world of which he is a part. The central idea, expressed in its simplicity, is found in section V. But when we fully grasp the meaning of those first lines, it is clear why they do not belong at the beginning of a poem: the mind would be unprepared for them, and the words, because too abruptly stated, would confuse and perplex. Wordsworth

prepares us by leading up, through the first stanzas, to a question, to which the fifth is a direct, condensed answer. In later life, he says, we come to feel that there was a visionary joy, experienced in early childhood, that now has passed away.

Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

The question prepares us for the fifth stanza, the germ, as has been said, of the whole poem. Stanza VI shows how through the substitution of earthly pleasures man comes to forget his heavenly heritage, and stanza VII how the imaginative play of childhood actually anticipates the more prosaic activities of maturity. The next stanza begins with an apostrophe, a most imaginative one, but one so long that if we do not realize that it is all leading to its summing up, "Thou little child," we lose its significance. In the latter part of the stanza we see how far man can leave behind him the unconscious happiness of his childish life. Then comes the reaction, in stanza IX, in which the grown man finds in the remembrances of his childhood spirit the basis of a hopeful interpretation of the present and future life. The tenth stanza brings us back to the joyful pictures of the first part, but now instead of starting doubtful questions they confirm belief in man's connection with eternal life, "which having been must ever be." Then comes the final stanza, showing the spirit of wisdom with which the mature man faces the sober conditions of his life.

Such, then, is the outline of ideas on which the poem rests; but with the grasp of these ideas, appreciation of the whole begins rather than ends. In every part it is found that the thought, even when abstract, is expressed in the language of pictures and images, in the simple, satisfying phrase that haunts the memory. The thread of thoughts, to be sure, binds all together, but there are passages of illuminating imagery or lucid diction which may be enjoyed wholly for themselves. Even the underlying thought is an atmosphere rather than an argument. Wordsworth himself says of it that though we can all bear testimony to "that dreamlike vividness, and splendor which invests objects of sight in childhood," nevertheless the conclusion he bases on the experience "is far too shadowy a notion to be recommended to faith, as more than an element in our instincts of immortality." Above all things we should not try to force our enjoyment of Wordsworth, either in this poem or in his

works generally. Our regard for a thing changes with our own experience, and what we care little for now we may regard highly hereafter. But meantime, so far as this poem is concerned, we cannot do better than come to familiar terms with the poem through repeated reading, particularly of those passages that please us most.

SUGGESTED STUDIES

METER

We do not study meter merely for the purpose of learning how to "scan." Why then? Verse is like music, in that it is written not for the eye but for the ear; and only as we express the music of the poem by sympathetic reading, do we really know what the author wrote. If others wish to share our interpretation, we pronounce the sounds aloud; otherwise we hear with our inward ear, and make no sound—essentially it is reading aloud in either case. The first reason for studying meter, then, is to aid in reading aloud, to cultivate a sense for the strong beat and the delicate variations of verse, and to realize how they express the poet's intent. This requires "ear," in which respect some have a natural advantage over others; yet every one can improve his power of mental hearing, and find added pleasure in poetry as a result. In dealing with the unfamiliar phenomena of sound, new terms must be found to make intercourse intelligible. These terms, the vocabulary of verse music, are the means of study; sympathetic reading is the end.

I. The Foot. *Kinds.*—In English verse four kinds of metrical feet are recognized, as follows:

Iambic: ⏑ ′, as in the word *defy.*

Trochaic: ′ ⏑, as in the word *fortune.*

Anapestic: ⏑ ⏑ ′, as in the word *interfere.*

Dactylic: ′ ⏑ ⏑, as in the word *mightily.*

Other combinations of accented and unaccented syllables are possible, but it is unnecessary to regard them as separate kinds of feet: they can better be regarded as irregular examples of one of these four kinds. A single line may be so irregular that from it alone it would be unsafe to judge of the meter of the poem in which it stands. But in a number of lines in succession these irregularities will be corrected, and the prevailing kind of foot will be felt as an underlying beat or rhythm throbbing through the whole structure of the verse.

Study.—Find two poems prevailingly iambic in beat; trochaic, etc. Judging from twenty random examples, can you say that one kind of foot markedly preponderates over the others in usage? Is any kind notable for infrequency? Taking the odes as one group, and the lighter poems in playful mood as another, observe whether there is noteworthy contrast as to the variety of meters in the two groups. Is there any difference in the variety of meters used by any two poets, as Wordsworth and Browning? Does the choice of meter seem particularly appropriate in any of the poems examined? From the poems written in any given foot, distinguish between those that call

naturally for slow, impressive reading, and those that are best read with quicker, sharper accent.

Irregularities.—Absolute metrical regularity would be likely to cause tiresome monotony in the sound of the verse. Freshness and variety result from delicate gradations of accent, from the omission or addition of unaccented syllables, or from the substitution of feet and sometimes of lines of other meters. Some of the ways of bringing metrical variety into verse are as follows:

1. By the addition of light syllables at the beginning or end of a normally complete line. When the extra syllable is thus added to an accented syllable at the end of a line, the resulting light ending is designated as "feminine."

We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone,
But we left him alone in his glo(ry).

Underneath a new-old sign
Sipping beverage divine,
(And) pledging with contented smack . . .

2. By the omission of a light syllable, sometimes two, at the beginning or end of a line of verse.

Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward. (⏑)

One more Unfortunate
Weary of breath. (⏑ ⏑)

(⏑ ⏑) Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone
(⏑) And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him.

3. By the substitution of one foot for another. Trochaic feet are often substituted for iambic, especially

at the beginning of a line, with a resulting effect of vigor. Iambic and anapestic feet are readily exchanged, as are trochaic and dactylic.

Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour.

And high and low the in*fluence know*——
But where is County Guy?

In reading verse sympathetically we adjust ourselves unconsciously to these variations from the strictly normal meter. More than that, there are passages in which the long vowel sounds and pauses required by the sense, and the accents required by the verse, do not exactly coincide: in these cases we adjust the one kind of stress to the other, also unconsciously, with the final result that lines otherwise monotonously regular become flexibly harmonious.

The sun upon the lake is low,
The *wild birds hush* their song.

The sonnet of Wordsworth's beginning "It is a beauteous evening," or the first stanza of Tennyson's *Break, break, break,* if read sympathetically, will illustrate these effects of musical variation admirably.

Study.—Read aloud *The Burial of Sir John Moore at Corunna* and *The Soldier's Dream,* both in anapestic verse, and determine which has the greater flexibility: note how the meter emphasizes the difference in mood between the poems. Observe how few are the strictly normal lines in Shelley's *The Indian Serenade,* yet how naturally the voice adapts itself to

the changes, and so reveals the melodious quality of the poem. Determine which lines of Wordsworth's *The Daffodils* are irregular in accent or in stress, and mark them; then read the poem aloud, observing how the slow and the quick lines express the changing thought of the poem.

II. The Line.—The number of feet in a line, quite as much as the kind of feet, determines the metrical effect of a given poem. Lines of different length, from two feet up, are designated as Dimeter, Trimeter, Tetrameter, Pentameter, Hexameter, etc. Although theoretically any combination of kind and number of feet is possible, in English verse, as a matter of fact,the ear accepts certain combinations (such as iambic tetrameter) which are therefore frequently used, and rejects others (like dactylic pentameter) which are, therefore, scarcely ever found.

It is interesting to observe that eight foot lines (as illustrated by those in Tennyson's *Locksley Hall* or Poe's *The Raven*) have a strong tendency to break in the middle, and thus to become virtually two lines of four feet each. Similarly, seven foot lines, like those in Byron's *Youth and Age*, are easily read as two lines of four and three feet—practically the ballad meter. Six foot lines, too, such as are found in Browning's *Up at a Villa* or in the several stanzas of Shelley's *To a Skylark*, can generally be broken into two lines of three feet each. When there are five iambic feet to a line, however, the ear does not always require a pause, and when it does require one, the

pause may be put freely at any part of the line. This pause is called the "cæsura," and its flexibility in iambic pentameter goes far to account for the variety of effect found in blank verse, and for its consequent popularity in long narrative poems and dramas in English.

Study.—Compose a line or two of verse, and note whether the metrical form chosen is frequently found in the poems of this volume. Note how certain stanza forms are made by combining lines of different lengths into a "pattern." Does the rime scheme emphasize the pattern of the stanza? How? Comparing several stanzas of short dactylic lines, Byron's *When We Two Parted* and Scott's *Gathering Song* and *Where Shall the Lover Rest,* observe how naturally two lines can be read as one longer one; and note how this effect is aided by the occasional running together of light syllables at the end of one line and the beginning of the next. Illustrate the flexibility of blank verse cæsura from passages in *Sohrab and Rustum.* Observe that the sense sometimes requires a more marked pause at the cæsura than at the end of the line. Show how it is possible in reading aloud to indicate these pauses without losing the effect of the line-by-line structure of blank verse.

SPECIAL SUBJECTS IN POETRY

I. Nature.—A very striking feature of English poetry is the part that Nature plays in it—and small

wonder, when it plays so large a part in life. There is this difference, however: in life, the impressions from nature stream in on us, are often broken and confused; whereas in poetry only one aspect appears at a time, and leaves a harmonious singleness of effect. This is easily illustrated.

One mood, the simplest in which we can approach nature, is that of pure physical enjoyment, like that expressed in *A Boy's Song*, by Hogg. A similar joy is felt by the man of strength in wrestling with the northeast wind, as Kingsley, in his stirring ode, shows so well. One step removed from this is the physical pleasure transferred from the actual experience to the memory, the best example of which is Wordsworth's poem on the daffodils. In another class of lyrics, some aspect of nature not only rouses the feelings but attracts the mind, setting up a chain of reflection leading back to the ever-present problem of man's own destiny. Of such poems Shelley's ode *To a Skylark* will always stand as one of the greatest examples. Many others readily come to mind, notably Burns's address *To a Mouse*.

In some lyrics, however, the attitude of mind is reversed, and instead of man's responding to the influence of nature, nature seems to adapt itself to his mood, expressing it in external symbol and deepening it by reaction. *Break, break, break*, by Tennyson, comes at once to mind as an example, for the poet approaches the sea with the mood of grief strong

upon him, and finds his feeling reflected by the unconscious sympathy of the scene. In the *Stanzas Written in Dejection Near Naples,* again, the mildness of the soft, warm day expresses perfectly the quality of Shelley's mood. And note how the landscape, in Burns's poem *Highland Mary,* reflects the contrast of his own feeling, first at the time of courtship, later of bereavement.

Does all this indicate, then, that the feeling for nature is inherent in all poetry? By no means: in a large body of poetry, just as in a large part of life, nature either plays no part at all, or else is treated superficially, with conventional rather than real interest. Not very much of this last attitude toward nature is represented in this volume, but Pope's *Rape of the Lock* will offer sufficient illustration. During the so-called Age of Pope it was the philosophical, the social, the intellectual aspects of life, rather than the human, the personal, the emotional, that interested the poets. And since in that life nature played an insignificant part, in the poetry of the period its importance is no greater. Later came a time when interest centered on the individual man—his emotions and his destiny—and then nature became once more important as an influence shaping man's inner life and a means of interpreting that life to others. The feeling for nature thus became associated with the ideal of Democracy in the so-called Romantic Revival at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The connection can be traced in all the great English poets of

the period, but most notably in the case of Wordsworth.

Study.—Compare the old ballads with the later narrative poems, to see whether nature plays a more important part in one than in the other. Illustrate concentrated singleness of effect in Tennyson's *The Eagle* or Wordsworth's *Upon Westminster Bridge.* In these poems we see vivid pictures of some scene in nature: contrast Shelley's *To the Moon,* or Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale,* observing that the appeal to the eye is less distinct in the poems dominated by strong feeling. Observe the use of nature as a parable in Campbell's *The River of Life,* Keats's *The Human Seasons,* and Browning's *Prospice,* and note how the interest is not in the scene for its own sake, but in the thoughts for which it stands. Note how the scene in Gray's *Elegy,* when once described, is felt as a harmonious atmosphere throughout the entire poem. Can Burns's *Ye Banks and Braes o' Bonnie Doon* be contrasted with Collins's *Ode Written in 1746* to illustrate direct as opposed to conventional language in the description of nature? To which class does Scott's *Hunting Song* belong? How far have the aspects of nature—scenes, birds, and flowers—brought out in these poems come within your own experience, and how far do they describe unfamiliar things? Do you feel any scenes to be typically national or local?

II. Death.—Most of the poems dealing with the subject of death express the sense of bereavement; a

few express the poet's feeling as he contemplates the end of his own life. It is interesting to compare such of these last as are included in this volume—a sonnet by Keats and the last six in the group entitled Poems on the Problem of Life. With the exception of Bryant's *Thanatopsis,* each was written near the close of the poet's own life, and has a kind of autobiographical value. Of course the personal element is subordinated, as it is in all works of art, to the universal: the poet speaks not for himself alone, but for all those of like nature; and he is concerned that his expression be not only true but permanently beautiful. Nevertheless there is large scope left for the expression of personality, and in putting the poems side by side we may gain an insight into certain typical moods with which men approach the end of life.

At one extreme is Keats, the eager lover of life and the beauty of the world. Under the figure of a lover facing separation from his beloved, he expresses, in the sonnet beginning "Bright Star! would I were steadfast as thou art," a passionate yearning to retain permanently the exquisite privileges of the world he actually knows. Landor's calm reveals a very different nature: the world is beautiful, but its warmth grows less with advancing age, and he faces the end of life with neither longing nor regret. Clough has a less personal feeling: his days have been perplexed by the insoluble mysteries of life, and now, as they draw to a close, he follows the impulse of his heart in turning to the hopeful solution—one that he hopes a

larger vision may confirm. In contrast to this is the feeling expressed in Stevenson's *Requiem*, that the world is a place for joyous work and play, from the manful exertion of which one turns at last with a sense of gratitude to his well-deserved rest. In Browning's *Prospice* enters the note, not found in the foregoing poems, of positive anticipation of a hereafter: death itself a struggle, to be approached not only with the confident courage that every strong man knows, but with the sustaining conviction that beyond it is the love that he began to know in his married life on earth. Finally comes Christina Rossetti's *Up-hill*, in which we feel that the confidence expressed is not so much courage as serenity, the rest and refreshment of the inn being the goal for which the arduous journey of life is but the preparation.

Whether or not the moods of these several poems are fairly interpreted in this brief survey, it clarifies our conception of "imagery" in poetry to observe how the different attitudes of the poems are expressed in each case figuratively. With the exception of the *Requiem*, which brings to the mind two pictures, a sailor and a hunter arriving home, each poem conceives of the relation of death to life under the form of a single figure, dwelt upon sufficiently to make the idea tangible, yet not so as to cloud the subtler meaning underneath.

Study.—In the poems grouped under Poems on Bereavement and Death, note that some, like *Highland Mary*, express personal grief; others, like *Glen-*

Almain, the Narrow Glen, impersonal loss,—with a wide range of feeling between. Toward which extreme would *O Captain! My Captain!* be placed? Both Landor and Browning have poems expressing bereavement: do they reflect the same differences of personality noted in the poems regarding the end of their own lives? Do the poems here grouped seem to express the first poignant sense of loss, or the calmer feeling of later reflection? Does the answer point to a reason for their lasting beauty? Is the metrical quality of these poems, taken as a whole, especially appropriate?

INDIVIDUAL POETS

The results of the following studies can be at best only fragmentary, for they are based on but a small portion of the author's work; yet if allowance be made for this, and the conclusions be held tentatively, it is always possible to correct them as increasing knowledge and experience suggest. Everything that follows, then, is to be accepted only as suggestion, subject to the possibility of later revision.

I. Browning.—It is noteworthy, first of all, that some of Browning's poems are narrative, some lyrical, —that there is a large range of interest in them. A glance at the narrative poems reveals the fact that all those in this volume relate incidents of war or siege. Was Browning primarily a singer of military exploits? Apart from the fact that the coincidence

is accidental in this case, closer observation shows that the military scene is not of chief concern to Browning, but merely the setting of his action; that the attention is on the individual man—how he conducts himself at a time that tests the quality of a man's soul. We think of Hervé Riel and Pheidippides not so much as the heroes of exciting incidents as the single-hearted men that they are, larger than their actions, great enough to do great deeds simply. In point of style it is first to be noted that the action itself, the story, is graphically portrayed, always vivid to the eye and ear. Furthermore, it is often dramatic, for the poet does more than tell the facts of his tale—he imagines himself as an actor in it, and interprets the situation through that actor's personality. The reader thus becomes for the time being himself another character, and so discovers new capacities in himself to feel and will. This broadening of the imaginative life is perhaps the chief service that literature renders the sympathetic reader.

The lyrics, it will be seen at once, have much in common with the narrative poems. They too imply, if not a story, yet a situation, in which a human being speaks his thought. The poet's imagination carries him into the heart of each new scene: now he is a Cavalier, singing death and destruction to the insolent foes of the king; now a modern patriot, lamenting the desertion of a trusted leader in freedom's cause; now an Italian person of quality, meditating on the pleasures of city life.

As is natural, the style in which these poems are expressed is one of abounding vigor. Browning writes from a rich vocabulary, and he uses it freely, not hesitating to employ an expressive word because it might be thought too homely for the polite usage of poetry. There is a corresponding fulness of allusion, the outpouring of an active mind and a well-stocked memory. And so compelling is the force of the thought that it is impatient, sometimes, of the restraint of careful grammatical structure, and expresses itself in broken, chaotic sentence forms. Similarly, it is vigor and strength, sometimes rude strength, that characterizes the meter of Browning's verse, rather than smoothness and delicacy of lyric flow. But though this is perhaps the characteristic effect, it does not blind the discerning to the fact that some lyrics, like *Evelyn Hope* and *The Lost Leader,* are notable for the delicate perfection of their musical quality.

Study.—Which of the poems included in this volume seem so typical of Browning that one would not imagine them written by another? Are there any that do not bear so obvious a stamp of personality? Are the poems of more broken sentence form the ones that contain the more frequent allusions? Is there any natural explanation? Is there any poet whose work seems especially different from Browning's in spirit and form? Illustrate. In the Complete Works of Browning will be found a group of poems called Dramatic Lyrics: do these poems con-

firm the definition of "dramatic" given above? Does Browning seem to confine himself to a small number of meters, or does he use a great variety? The poems in this volume indicate the answer, which may be confirmed by looking over a few more poems in his complete works.

II. Wordsworth.—The name of Wordsworth is always connected with the idea of "nature" in poetry. It is not surprising, therefore, that we find that Wordsworth contributes a large share to the "Poems on the World of Nature," and that throughout practically all the other poems here included nature is felt to be a pervading interest. Yet it is not in nature for its own sake, its intrinsic charm and beauty alone, that Wordsworth is interested. Poems like the *Ode to Duty* and the sonnet beginning *Milton! Thou shouldst be living at this hour* show the poet's strong interest in human character, in high moral and spiritual standards of life. It is the relation of the two—man and nature—that is the subject of the greater part of Wordsworth's poetry.

Briefly stated, it was Wordsworth's belief that sympathy with nature, and a wise understanding of her teachings, should be a leading influence in the development of man's highest nature. This understanding sympathy comes gradually: first the youthful sense of glad joy in physical contact with nature —walking, skating, climbing; then the maturer pleasure of remembered beauty, such as is expressed in *The Daffodils;* finally the contemplation of the deeper

meaning of nature's lessons, the insight they give us into higher conceptions of man's destiny. Wordsworth applies this belief to the humble country people who have been brought up among scenes of natural beauty, and attributes their open-hearted simplicity and homely devoutness to the influence of their natural surroundings. The poems called *The Education of Nature* and *To the Highland Girl of Inversneyde* are the direct embodiment of this conviction.

It is thus easily seen how Wordsworth's interest in nature connects itself with his belief in the higher meaning of Democracy—based on the intrinsic worth of every human soul, no matter how humble the station in which it may be found. Not that alone, for the emphasis is rather on the other side: in simple, rural life normal human instincts of feeling and expression are likely to find a more free and natural development than in the complex life of the cities. To the experience of this simple, rural life, therefore, Wordsworth turns when he wishes to find subjects of truest human interest. Such is the significance of poems like *The Reverie of Poor Susan, Lucy Gray,* and *Simon Lee, the Old Huntsman.* One who asks why it is that the humblest soul is felt to have such inherent worth comes at once to the central point of Wordsworth's belief,—in the immortal part of man's nature, his relation to the divine, eternal world. This belief finds direct expression in the *Ode on Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood.*

Consistent with this attitude toward life is Wordsworth's conviction regarding the language of poetry. It is in simple words, the direct language of everyday life, that sincere feeling is best expressed. In declaring this belief, Wordsworth took issue with the prevailing standards of the preceding century, which seemed to him unnaturally artificial. In such perfect poems as *She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways* and *The Reaper* he best illustrated his own theory.

Study.—In reading the notes to Wordsworth's poems, observe how directly his works are the results of individual incidents in his life. Does this fact limit their interest to that of a record of accidental circumstances? How could the matter be illustrated by such a poem as *To the Highland Girl of Inversneyde?* In Wordsworth's "nature" poems, are the impressions generally clear-cut, vivid, or are they indistinct, as though felt rather than seen, under the strong spell of a mood? Point out passages in the *Ode on Intimations of Immortality* illustrating three ways of enjoying nature,—experiencing the joy of physical exhilaration, finding pleasure in the beauty of natural scenes, and gaining philosophical serenity in the contemplation of nature's laws. Do Wordsworth's temperament and poetic ideals help to explain the fact that he has chosen the sonnet form for many of his finest poems, whereas certain poets, —Browning, for example,—have not? What kind of metrical foot seems to prevail in Wordsworth's poems? Point out passages in this volume illustrat-

ing the so-called "poetic diction" which Wordsworth wishes to supplant with a simpler, directer style.

III. Keats.—There is a word that always rises to the mind with the mention of the poetry of Keats, and that is—"beauty." This is not merely because of the fact that his own poems are beautiful, but because, in his own thought, beauty in nature, in life, in art, is the sign of the highest perfection, and the enjoyment of it the most exquisite human pleasure. The simplest realization of beauty comes with a mood of passive acceptance, the spirit of quiet enjoyment expressed in the sonnet *To One Who Has Been Long in City Pent.* But to this purely emotional pleasure is added sometimes the delight of intellectual appreciation, the play of the mind over beautiful objects, the tracing of happy emotions to their source. It is in such a mood that Keats dwells on the loveliness of form and action preserved in the figures on the ancient Grecian urn. Art, he finds, has done what life is unable to accomplish—has caught a fleeting moment of perfect beauty, and made it permanent forever. This aspect of beauty—its fleeting, transitory nature—explains another mood expressed in the poetry of Keats,—the passionate clinging to the present moment of perfection, the poignant sorrow at seeing beauty fade and die. In the *Ode to a Nightingale* Keats tries to escape from the sad realization of the conditions of this world,

> Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;

and in his last sonnet, *Bright Star! Would I Were Steadfast as Thou Art,* his exquisite pleasure in the warmth of human love turns to pain at the thought of impending separation.

But this shadow that is ever ready to fall over the contemplation of present beauty is not to be found in the world of the imagination. That, it is needless to say, is a world remote in time and spirit from the realistic conditions of our present life. And so the stories of Keats carry us back to the days and scenes of Greek mythology, or, as in *The Eve of St. Agnes,* to the romantic atmosphere of mediæval life. Whether the theme be story or song, beauty of form is, of course, the appropriate expression of the mind of Keats. To trace this beauty in detail is one of the pleasures of reading his poems. Most obvious among such details of beauty are the descriptive touches in the stories, the imaginative flashes in the lyrics, phrased all with final perfection, —the delicate musical beauty of stories and lyrics both. Another aspect of expression, however, ought not to be overlooked—the orderly development of thought and mood, the harmony between a poem's substance and the form of line and stanza chosen to contain it. In view of this it is wholly natural, therefore, and no mere accident, that in looking for the most perfect examples of formal odes and sonnets we should turn instinctively to the work of Keats.

Study.—As an example of narrative art, note how, in reading *The Eve of St. Agnes,* one is first made

accustomed to the setting of the story,—the castle, the guests, the mediæval atmosphere,—before the attention centers on the principal characters of the tale. Observe, too, by what gradual steps Porphyro's plan rises and develops in his own mind, and finally is consented to by Angela. Contrasted with the restrained, simple, "classic" treatment of *Sohrab and Rustum,* what features of spirit, ornament, and diction in *The Eve of St. Agnes* illustrate "romantic" treatment? In *The Mermaid Tavern* and the sonnet *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer,* note the evidence of Keats's literary enthusiasms. Connect the thought of the sonnet *On the Terror of Death* with the actual circumstances in the life of Keats. Observe how the thought in the "Italian" sonnet, *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer,* is divided into two parts of eight and six lines; whereas the "Shaksperian" sonnet, *On the Terror of Death,* is divided into three quatrains and a couplet. Illustrate this harmony of content and metrical form in the stanzas of *The Eve of St. Agnes* and of the odes.

IV. Shelley.—It happens that all of Shelley's poems included in this volume are lyrics—that no narratives appear among them. This in itself is significant, for although Shelley has indeed written narrative poems, even these are not in the true sense stories, but rather idealistic visions held together by a slight narrative thread. It also appears that Shelley does not contribute to the group of deliberately reflective poems "on the problem of life," or to the

lighter poems "in playful mood." These facts have their explanation. Shelley's poems are an expression of personal emotion, the reaction of a sensitive spirit upon the conditions of human life. There is, to be sure, an element of reflective meditation in the poems, but there is a stronger sense of deep feeling, and it is the intensity of this that leaves the final impression. And though the poems have grace and delicacy too, these qualities are not, as in playful verse, in the service of whimsicality or sentiment, but expressive rather of sensitive tenderness.

It is natural, therefore, to find that among the best of Shelley's poems are certain exquisite lyrics of love—such as *The Indian Serenade,* or *One Word is Too Often Profaned.* Other poems, addressed to the members of his intimate circle, idealize the relation of sympathetic friendship. *The Invitation* and *The Recollection* are among the best examples of these. The dominating mood of certain other poems is that of longing, in which enters a note of sad realization of the hopelessness of it. *A Dream of the Unknown* is such a poem, and it is typical of Shelley's mind that the wild garden that he describes with such delicacy should be a dream phantom of "visionary flowers." It is but a step to poems of another class, those dominated by a reaction of resigned despair. Examples come readily to mind, the most notable among them, perhaps, being the *Stanzas Written in Dejection Near Naples.*

In their several ways all these divisions of Shel-

ley's poems express the same mind,—a spirit yearning passionately for the ideal, willing rather to suffer disillusionment and despair than to lower in any degree his high standard of perfection. But the ideals he cherishes are not abstract; he longs to realize practically all his hopes, and, in the face of disappointment, even his dreams are prophecies of final fulfilment. So it is that the skylark directs him to a perfect ideal of poetic attainment, and the west wind bears a personal suggestion of hope for the final acceptance of his poetic message.

Study.—Observe whether the poems which Shelley addressed to friends—*The Invitation, The Recollection,* and *To a Lady, With a Guitar*—leave an impression of real people and places, or of a land of imagination. Do Shelley's poems seem to be "autobiographic" in the sense that many of Wordsworth's are? What is meant by the "subjective" interest in Shelley's poetry, as compared with the "objective" interest of such a poet as Campbell? Does the verse accent in Shelley's poems, compared with that in the poems of Scott, seem to fall with regularity? How does this matter affect the sound of Shelley's poems when read aloud? Why are the poems of Burns on the whole more suitable to be set to music than those of Shelley?

GENERAL SURVEY

It is much to know poems, to know them well and to care for them. In that respect they are like friends —the more we see of them, the more we find in common. But friends have another interest for us beside the personal regard we have for them: we like to compare them, to note what interests they have in common, what makes them "different" from others, what part of our own life they share. And in doing this we feel that we understand not only them better, but ourselves as well—that we make contact with life, which is a broader thing than knowing only people. So it is with poems. Taken one at a time, they are poems, perhaps with some special appeal to us, yet special poems still. Compared with one another, they go to make up poetry, a larger thing, because they have one quality in common: art—whatever that may mean.

There is nothing to be gained by trying to define "poetry" or "art" now: perhaps the mere definition will never interest us. But a simpler inquiry is both interesting and profitable; namely, to set side by side before us a few poems that we already know, and to observe what they have in common. If we are successful, and then we go on adding other poems to the

number, when we pause at last we shall find that we have indeed arrived, unconsciously, at some clear ideas concerning poetry in the larger sense. For such an inquiry the poems included in this volume are well adapted, and the groupings in which they appear are convenient. Narrative poems are best to begin with, and the simplest of these, the group of old English ballads, afford a natural starting-point for our study.

OLD BALLADS

It is impossible to read several old ballads in succession without being struck by the directness with which they go straight to the heart of the story they tell. There is movement, action, from the very first stanza, and more than that, action that leads unerringly to the central interest of the tale—nothing roundabout, secondary, indirect. *Johnie Armstrong* is a good example, but any one will serve. This effect of straight-forward, vigorous movement is enhanced by another quality found in practically all old ballads, but conspicuously in certain ones of them; namely, concentration of interest on the important stages of the action. *Sir Patrick Spens* furnishes a particularly happy illustration of this. No words are lost between the giving of advice by the "eldern knicht" and the acting thereon by the king. In the next line the letter has been already written, and within the stanza Sir Patrick has received it. After the first bitter outcry we must imagine him transported to

the company of his sailors, giving energetic, cheery orders to his "merry men all." Which of his comrades it was that remonstrated with him is not even mentioned. And then the preparation, the start, the storm, the wreck,—all these incidents the story passes abruptly over, and returns again to the shore, where the little company of women wait, and wait in vain, for the return of their absent lords. It is amazing, when we stop to think of it, how much action has been conveyed to us in the eleven short stanzas of the ballad, and how readily our attention has flashed from one important moment to another as the tale has been unfolded to us.

Another aspect of this same quality of directness in the old ballads is their prevailingly concrete diction: the situations are put before our very eyes, so that we see and hear what happens. The idea would perhaps have been adequately conveyed had we been told, in general terms, that Sir Patrick Spens and his men were drowned; but in the ballad it comes before us visibly, in a picture,—

> Bot lang ower a' the play wer playd
> Thair hats they swam aboone.

Similarly, *The Battle of Otterburn* tells, in effect, that the Earl Douglas, in his first encounter with Lord Percy, overcame him, to the consternation of the latter's adherents; but it does not say so in any such abstract terms: rather,

But O how pale his lady lookd,
Frae aff the castle-wa,
When down before the Scottish spear
She saw proud Percy fa.

Now all these examples of vivid action told in the language that helps one see and feel, combine to make a single impression, and it is useful to give that impression a name. The term most convenient to use, on the whole, is "objective"; by which is meant that the attention rests not on the writer, but the story; not on the motive, but the deed; not on the idea of emotion and action, but the concrete realization of them in fact. That is objectivity in literature. The term will become more familiar with use, and perhaps more flexible as well, but in order that it may have definite meaning for us, we cannot do better than connect it in thought with the concrete directness of these old ballads.

No less interesting are the results when the inquiry turns from the way of telling the stories to the verse form in which most of them come down to us. The stanza is in most ballads the same, with strong swing and simple rime scheme. The line, though it is smooth and regular in some of the ballads, *Young Waters* for example, is notably rough in some of the others, as can be seen by comparing the final stanzas of *The Battle of Otterburn.* The words and phrases, as well, have a typical character, for apart from their concreteness, already mentioned, they are found to have certain conventional features wholly their own.

For one thing, there are many alliterative phrases, examples of which in abundance come readily to mind,—*merry men, wild wood, flesh and fell, bonnie boy, dungeon deep,* and so on. Such expressions as these are not confined to the individual ballads in which we happen to find them, but are repeated again and again through ballad literature. This repetition extends itself to phrases not necessarily alliterative, like *broad letter, golden hair;* to favorite numbers, like *three, seven, forty;* to situations, such as a company of ladies combing their hair with golden combs, or a knight, questioning his page-boy as to the faithfulness of his lady; and even to whole stanzas, like the gallant words with which Johnie Armstrong ended his life, assigned to other heroes, in other ballads, as well as to the hero of this.

Now these conventional features of ballad diction and meter, as well as the objective nature of the stories, are of course results, due to some special cause or series of causes; and so it is natural that the next question should be, "What has brought all this about?" The answer points back to the days, centuries ago, when the ballads were first being sung in England, and to the conditions under which they have come down to us of a later time. We know that ballads are traceable many generations back, in a great number of cases hundreds of years; but we cannot assign them to definite dates, nor can we connect them with individual authors. In fact, one theory as to the origin of ballads is that they began, not with a single

author at all, but with a group of people joined in festive dance and chorus. However, it is not necessary for us absolutely to decide this question, for after all, the point of really great value in understanding the old ballads is to realize the conditions under which they have been passed on, from father to son, until they have finally found their way into books.

In earlier times before books existed, or later, in out-of-the-way places or among simple people where books were not to be found, these stories were told and retold from one to another, and thus passed on through the generations. The result was that a stanza form of strong, simple movement was for the most part used, rather than a variety of complex metrical forms, subtle in effect and difficult to memorize. *The Bailiff's Daughter of Islington* is in the typical ballad measure, as are most of the selections here represented, but it is to be observed that *The Twa Corbies* has a slightly different movement, and that *Lord Randal* has an anapestic swing peculiar to itself. Another natural result, which we may note in passing, is that the different stories, in going through so many hands, among village groups widely separated from each other, became changed, little by little, until the version of a story told in one locality would be very different from that being told elsewhere; and so it happens that in most cases several versions of a single ballad have been preserved, and that the form that we know is likely to be the one thought to be best by the one who prints it. This same fact of oral repetition ex-

plains also another feature of ballad literature,—the occurrence of alliterative phrases and the repetition of certain words, lines, and even whole stanzas. It made the task of memory much easier, to use the familiar phrases, especially when the words were held together by the sound; and it was a natural thing to carry a familiar idea, or phrase, or passage, from one ballad over to another. Finally, it is known that the old stories were not habitually spoken, but rather sung, or chanted to some simple tune. The evidences of this custom remain in the bits of refrain that are sometimes to be found, as in the first stanza of *Robin Hood's Death*. The custom of singing the ballads, also, accounts for the irregular syllables often crowded into a line; for it is easy, in singing, to combine several words under a single note.

All this helps explain the effect of directness and vigor that first impresses us as we read a number of ballads in succession. And in the light of it we may go a step farther in accounting for this fine sense of virility. The stories deal with those situations in human life in which the feeling is simple and strong, and naturally shared by a great number of people. They are stories of heroism in danger, gallantry in war, constancy in love; and, on the other hand, of the conflict of the treacherous against the brave in battle, the tragedy of unfaithfulness in domestic life. Taken as a whole, they represent life in its somber rather than its joyous aspect; but more important than that, they reveal the deep, moving experiences common to all

humanity, rather than the subtler emotions of a complex, artificial society. In other words, just as outwardly these ballads had their origin and their continued life among the great mass of the common people, so their spirit is close to the heart of the people as a whole, not to any limited section of it. We of a later age and a more highly developed society may also take pleasure in them, but it is because we too have a share in the common humanity of the folk of the ballads. All this explains what is meant when a poem is called "universal" in its appeal. It is a good term to remember, not only because it sums up the strongest and most lasting impression of the old ballads, but because it expresses a quality common, in greater or less degree, to all great poetry.

LATE BALLADS

The poems grouped under the heading *Late Ballads* are, in a large sense, like the old ballads both in substance and in form, yet in origin and purpose they are radically different. For these later stories were written by individual men, and the form in which we read them is due to the deliberate art of their writers. For this reason, when we compare them with the old ballads, as is wholly natural that we should do, we are able to ask how the conscious art of the poet differs from the unconscious art of the people.

The first glance reveals much in common between the two groups. Like the folk ballads, these later

poems have certain external features,—the same stanza form, the same concentrated directness, the same objective quality, the same kind of subject, and much the same spirit. All this is due, of course, to the influence of the older poems,—to the purpose of the poets not so much to imitate the folk ballads, as to write in their spirit and profit by their method. That they have done so is shown by the fact that almost any of the poems of the second group might, on a hasty reading, be mistaken for an "old" ballad of popular origin. It is upon a more careful reading that the differences appear.

The metrical differences, to take the most external considerations first, are not so much differences of stanza form as they are effects of harmony within the stanza. To be sure, *Rosabelle* and *Lady Clare* employ a stanza form that is not identical with the typical ballad measure, for the lines are all of equal length and the rimes strictly alternate; similarly, *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* concludes each stanza with a two-foot line; and *The Pride of Youth* has a stanza form entirely its own: nevertheless, the difference of metrical effect is due not so much to these things as it is to the greater regularity of accent throughout the poems, and to special characteristics that can best be brought out by means of examples. In *The Wreck of the Hesperus* a slight shift of accent in the sixth and seventh stanzas puts the weight of the voice on the telling words—*colder, colder, down.* In the sixth stanza, the last two lines echo in sound the sense of

the verse; but not so notably as the passage beginning with the fifth stanza from the end, where, after the contrasting line

Looked soft as carded wool,

comes the suggested fury of "rocks," "gored," and "horns," the brittle shattering sound of "rattling," "sheathed in ice," "glass," and the sonorous shouting of the winds above all—

Ho! ho! the breakers roared!

A very delicate effect of metrical harmony appears in *La Belle Dame Sans Merci,* and has no small part in the unearthly impression that the poem makes. In contrast with the quicker movement of the preceding lines, the short line that concludes each stanza falls with a strange solemnity, especially where there is a succession of heavily accented syllables,—

And no birds sing;
And made sweet moan;
On the cold hill's side.

It is not unnatural to look for yet other signs of the artistic spirit, beside these metrical effects. And very easy is it to find them, especially in the diction of the late ballads. In *Lucy Gray* can be observed the same concreteness of diction that is found in the folk ballads, and in such phrases as "solitary song,"

and "whistles in the wind," is the same tendency to alliteration; yet the individual hand of the poet is seen in the definiteness of the descriptive touches,—the wooden bridge a furlong from the door, the broken hawthorn hedge,—and in such close observation as in the lines,

> Her feet disperse the powdery snow
> That rises up like smoke.

Closest to the diction of the old ballads, perhaps, is *Lord Ullin's Daughter,* with such phrases as "silver pound," "bonny bride," "winsome lady," "waters wild"; farthest from it is the delicate suggestiveness of *La Belle Dame Sans Merci,* with lines like these:

> Alone and palely loitering;
> I saw their starved lips in the gloam.

How are all these differences between the folk ballads and those written by individual poets to be summed up? Here again there is need of certain general terms that will help keep the qualities apart in our minds. But they are easily supplied. The ballads in which the author's personality is expressed, and which require, therefore, special freedom in phrase and style, may be called "personal"; and poems like *Lucy Gray* and *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* can stand as examples. On the other hand, those in which there is no single author, or in which the author has been content to hide his personality behind famil-

iar thoughts and phrases, may be called "impersonal"; and as examples we have not only the whole body of folk ballads, but such poems as *Lord Ullin's Daughter* as well. It is then but a step, and an easy one, to notice that the poem of "impersonal" tone, like *Sir Patrick Spens,* is likely to be "objective" in incident and diction; whereas the poem of "personal" tone, like *Lucy,* is generally marked by a style that may be called, in contrast, "subjective." The order in which the groups of poems are here taken up shows progress in a single clearly-marked direction,—from the "impersonal" to the "personal," from the "objective" to the "subjective."

SHORT NARRATIVE POEMS

In the body of the text a group of poems on battle and war is separated from another group of short narrative poems. This is, of course, simply a matter of convenience, for no essential distinction between stories in verse is based merely on the subjects treated. For the present purpose, therefore, both groups fall into one division,—short narrative poems of individual authorship, with a wide range of subject and style. In this latter point lies their difference from the poems that have just been discussed: those, the Late Ballads, follow more or less closely a definitely marked tradition; these others have freedom to draw upon all the resources of narrative poetry.

This freedom is shown most strikingly in the metri-

cal variety of the poems in the group. From poems like *Love,* by Coleridge, written in a verse that bears considerable resemblance to the ballad measure, the stanza forms extend so as to include not only the short couplets of *Barbara Frietchie,* but also the longer stanzas of *Lochinvar,* the more complex ones of *The Sands of Dee,* and finally the wholly irregular paragraphs of Tennyson's *The Revenge.*

When the metrical swing of the line is considered, however, the full significance of this freedom is felt; for meter appeals not so much to the eye, as we glance over the printed page, as to the ear, when we read the poem aloud or catch its movement with our inward hearing. Then we notice the dashing swing of the anapests in *Lochinvar,* or, in the same meter, the persistent, pounding gallop of Roland, carrying the good news from Ghent to Aix. Rougher and more irregular, full of power, is the anapestic vigor of *The Battle of Naseby.* Similarly, *The Charge of the Light Brigade* owes much of its stirring energy to the rush of its hurrying dactyls. In striking contrast is the quiet musical dignity of the iambic measure, as seen in Coleridge's poem *Love.* Even within the narrower limits of a single kind of meter can be felt distinct differences of metrical feeling. The anapests of *The Burial of Sir John Moore* have a wholly different effect from those of *Lochinvar,* for example; just as the iambic movement of Scott's *The Outlaw* would never be confused with that of Wordsworth's *Laodamía.*

No less wide is the range of narrative method found in this same group of poems. The gallop to Aix is told in the first person—a vivid retrospect by one of the riders. So, too, in the poem *Love,* we hear the story in the words of the chief actor in it. Most of the others poems are told in the third person; but even here a difference must be noted: in such a poem as the *Incident of the French Camp,* or, to a less degree, *Hervé Riel,* we feel the narrator to have been a witness to the events of the tale; whereas in other poems, like *Hohenlinden,* or *Laodamía,* the teller is that vague, undefined, impersonal spirit, that can nevertheless report accurately whatever men think or feel or do.

The poets that draw thus freely on all these resources of metrical effect and narrative method have, as is natural, purposes that vary as widely as the means; and, as all study of results leads to a study of causes, our inquiry inevitably leads us to a consideration of these purposes as well. As we should expect, the personality of the poet, felt faintly as an element in some of the later English ballads, has in these stories a large freedom of expression. The center of attention is still upon the action of the story; but it is sometimes a single phase of the action that the poet has selected, or perhaps some special angle from which we are invited to view it. *Hohenlinden,* for example, depicts a battle as a glorious conflict followed by the sad, noble spectacle of a field of warriors' graves; or the soldiers who have just buried

Sir John Moore are described as retiring, leaving him "alone in his glory." Yet so different is the attitude of Southey's *After Blenheim,* that doubt is cast as to the reality of the issues in battle, and the mind is left questioning whether, after all, war, and the sacrifices of it, is not all a sad mistake. Even in the tales of war-time heroism, the incidents are recorded under strikingly different aspects. The *Incident of the French Camp* tells a story of personal heroism and tells it in a way that throws emphasis on the boy's soldierly pride and his personal loyalty to his great chief; Barbara Frietchie's deed, on the other hand, is shown to spring from pure patriotic fervor, a burning, through impersonal, devotion to her country's cause.

Descriptive passages have their part in many of these brief narrative poems, and that part often an important one. The opening description in *Barbara Frietchie*—gentle, peaceful landscape—increases the vivid sense of ruthless destruction that accompanied the army's march. Another example is the poem *Love,* in which the scene by the ancient tower, with its rude outline indistinct in the moonlight, and against it the dim figure of an armed knight, heightens by its romantic contrast the story of youth and passion enacted within its shadow. More striking still is the part played by the scene in *The Sands of Dee,* for there nature seems, to the imagination, to become a part of the action itself, and to be a hostile force, helping to bring about the maiden's death. In certain poems, on the other hand, the entire absence of

description is as noteworthy as its presence is in those just cited. There is no time for landscape in *The Charge of the Light Brigade*: there is simply an order, a charge, a murderous cannonade, heart-sickening slaughter, and retreat—a story of men, guns, and "the mouth of Hell." And between these extremes comes the descriptive element in the majority of the poems, —such as the rapidly flashed pictures seen by the galloping horsemen on the way to Aix, the poised figure of *Laodamía* awaiting answer to her prayer, or the "smiling joy" of the boy soldier approaching Napoleon with his message. Such passages as these, in all their variety, may escape conscious notice, but their influence in the total impression of the poems would be hard to overestimate.

When we see how all these details of poetic practice —meter, diction, emphasis, descriptive touches—are delicately adapted to bring out the central feeling of the poem, we come to realize the part played by art in the world of narrative poetry. Nature is the subject; art is the expression: both are combined in the true poem. Now in the group of old English ballads it has been natural to lay stress on the element of nature, whereas in the present group of short narratives the emphasis has been on that of art. But it would not do to feel that the two groups of poems are too widely separated. When all is said and done, the strong bond of nature holds them both strongly together. The point is worth dwelling on a little.

The old ballads, it will be remembered, though they

lack conscious art, are notable for their directness and concentration—qualities summed up under the term "objective." These qualities are shared alike by the other narrative poems, even those that owe most to the element of conscious art. Poems from both groups are direct and concentrated, in their several degrees, each upon its own fragment of action selected from the larger experience of man. *Johnie Armstrong* tells one story of a gallant fight against impossible odds, and *The Revenge* tells another, with considerably more elaboration of detail; yet when the multifarious action and the confused motives and issues of a battle are taken into account, it becomes clear that Tennyson's poem, no less than the ballad, follows the method of concentrating the mind upon the salient aspects and moments of the story. Again, all these narrative poems, of popular and individual origin, are objective in the sense that each tells a story conceived of as taking place in the actual physical world, the realm of action rather than of emotion. Alike in *The Battle of Otterburn* and *Hohenlinden* is a disastrous battle fought; and though the latter poem pauses to reflect upon the loss of brave human life occasioned by the battle, it tells, no less than the former, a story that we can follow with our senses—the sights of war with our eyes, the sounds of it with our ears. Finally it is clear, without pointing to special examples, that in each of the poems of whatever group there is a breadth of appeal—the exercise of some great quality, some touch of deep human feeling—that takes it out of the

realm of the accidentally interesting, and carries afar its power to stir the mind and heart: and to that extent they are all universal as well.

At this point analysis fails. It is useful, in beginning to study poetry, to be able to separate this element from that, to contrast one influence with another. But inevitably a point is reached at last where all the separate elements are fused into the one impression; and then first we are in the presence of the poem itself. The earlier observations of the mind are not lost because they do not longer stand out as separate judgments; they rather go to enrich the total pleasure with which the mind and heart together respond to the poem's appeal. This is the point to stress, then, as we approach the end of our consideration of these brief narrative poems. With this caution clearly before us, we may use the method of analysis without abusing it, still realizing that though observation and comparison may increase pleasure, they will never take the place of that spontaneous delight when one meets a new poem to care for, deepening into affection with repeated reading and familiarity.

LONGER NARRATIVE POEMS

There is little to add about the poems that form the group of longer narrative poems. Standing, as they do, between the short, concentrated poems of single episode and the long stories of epic proportion and

complexity, the poems grouped under this head have more in common with the former class than with the latter. *The Ancient Mariner,* it must be confessed, does cover a fairly long series of events, and the *Rape of the Lock,* if it does not copy epic style, at least mocks it: yet even in the former case all the events in the mariner's story are felt to be parts of a single experience, whose unity is further emphasized by the device of the wedding-guest; and in the latter case we think of the poem simply as a playful elaboration on the briefest and most fragile of episodes. The essential brevity of scope in the other poems is emphasized, in the case of *The Eve of St. Agnes* and *Sohrab and Rustum,* by the strict unity of time and action. So it may fairly be said that the principles of the short narrative poems can be applied, with some degree of allowance, to these stories of greater length. For that reason, and because each of the latter group is treated separately in the notes, only a few brief observations of a general nature need be made here.

It takes only a glance to show that the additional length of these poems is not devoted merely to covering more ground in the story and adding more narrative details. A large picture differs from a small one not so much in the number of details admitted, as in the scale upon which everything is drawn. The result is an effect of largeness and sweep, perhaps of greater weight and power. This is particularly true of poetry, for in the process of reading, details reach the mind singly, and the poems that have a sense of

leisureliness give time for the impressions to sink in, so that the reader comes with ever readier sympathy into the imaginative mood of the tale. *The Eve of St. Agnes* is a case in point. Step by step the reader accustoms himself to the unfamiliar atmosphere of a mediæval castle, and to the issues of love and hate, the prospects of youth and age, working themselves out within its walls,—the chill and dreary chapel, the festive splendor of the hall, the long dim passages, finally the chamber of Madeline herself, where at last the reader, now fully in accord with the spirit of the tale, is prepared to follow in sympathetic mood the more intimate unfolding of the story.

A slightly closer examination of this same kind reveals the added fact that in the longer narrative poems can be detected signs of a formal organization. An " introduction " precedes the main action, leading up to it, and preparing the reader's mind. This is formal, elaborately so, in *The Rape of the Lock;* informal, but quite as useful, in *Sohrab and Rustum.* Similarly, when the story is virtually finished, a " conclusion " follows, for the purpose of gradually lowering the emotional interest and bringing the mind to rest. The transfer of attention from the mariner to the wedding-guest accomplishes this in Coleridge's poem; and in Arnold's we find an example of singular perfection in the final description of the river and the eternal stars.

The longer poems, finally, present one more aspect from which it is well to view them as a whole. If we

put them beside the shorter narratives, and ask whether they owe their added power to the greater interest of the story itself or to the way in which the poet tells the story, it will appear at once that the impression is due to the latter cause. Merely as a story, the flight on St. Agnes' Eve has little to hold our interest; or again, the bare outline of even so moving a story as *Sohrab and Rustum* would perhaps hardly stir us. At first glance this seems most surprising; but only as we stop so to consider it do we realize how great is the poet's part in searching the story for its vital elements, and setting them forth so as to make us feel their power. *The Ancient Mariner* would have been a crude ghost story had not Coleridge brought us by subtle degrees under its unearthly spell, and suggested the delicate connection between the sailor's strange adventures and the experiences of the human soul. And only the sure hand of Keats, with its exquisite sensitiveness and his command of the magic phrase, could have made *The Eve of St. Agnes* the perfect poem that it is. Perhaps this ability of the poet to see beyond the mere facts of life, and to show what meaning they have for us, can fully be realized only in the study of the drama, where he is freest to exercise his own peculiar powers. But however that may be, he does the same for us in narrative poetry too, especially in these examples of moderate length, and through them we can gain some immediate realization of what part the poet plays in the life of the mind.

METRICAL EXPRESSION IN LYRIC POETRY

In the reading of poetry it is the most tangible thing that is likely to make the strongest first impression. And in lyric poetry, it is perhaps safe to say, this impression comes from the music. Pure music, of course, is another form of art; yet as familiarity with lyrics grows it is astonishing to see how close is the approach to the effects of pure music itself. Notes, to be sure, poetry lacks, but tones it does have, and in their beauty lies much of the peculiar charm of verse. Perhaps the nearest approach to the effect of pure music is the wordless refrain—pure song—such as is found in Shakspere's *It Was a Lover and His Lass,*

> With a hey and a ho, and a hey nonino

It is the most artless, the most natural expression of a joyous, care-free spirit. But the song which contains these bursts of spontaneous music is itself trembling on the edge of being pure sound: in the last three lines especially it is the playful repetition of sound that carries the effect of the poem,—that, and the lilting gaiety of the rhythm:

> In spring time, the only pretty ring time,
> When birds do sing hey ding a ding:
> Sweet lovers love the Spring.

It needs only to read, immediately after this poem, Shelley's *Dirge,* to emphasize the matter by contrast.

We do not need to go to the meaning of the poem, to get an idea of sorrow: the sound of moans and wailing is in the very words themselves:

Rough wind, that moanest loud,
Grief too sad for song;
Wild wind, when sullen cloud
Knells all the night long;
Sad storm whose tears are vain,
Bare woods whose branches stain,
Deep caves and dreary main,——
Wail for the world's wrong!

What should be the conclusion from many examples such as these, in which the effect is one of nearly pure emotion, and the lines are notable for their appropriateness of sound? This, surely, it would be safe to say: that in one direction, at any rate, lyric poetry not only approaches the effect of music, but also employs methods not unlike those of music itself.

Furthermore, it would be natural to expect that the lyrics actually written to be sung should be those in which the sound counts for most in the total effect. And that, in a large sense, is practically found to be the case. The most obvious examples are found in the poetry of love, much of which, naturally, is in the form of songs. Shelley's *The Indian Serenade* is such a one, notable for the tone of its vowel sounds; notable, too, for the open simplicity of its thought. For this further appears, when we take time to think of it, that in listening to song we have no attention to spare

for delicate subtleties of meaning: the mind should grasp the sense with perfect ease, if the emotions are to respond readily to the feeling that is in the song. No group of poems illustrates this better than the love songs of Burns, and one of these, the one beginning "O my luve's like a red, red rose," will stand for all. Its meaning is simple and expressed in the most direct of words; more than that, there is repetition of word and phrase that addresses itself rather to the ear and the feelings than to the eye and the mind: the poem, in a word, suggests song so strongly that it seems to sing itself. Should we wish to test this by contrast, no poems would be more to our purpose than the sonnets. In these, taken as a whole, the ideas are discriminated and related each to each, and the mind is too closely engaged with them to give itself up to the free enjoyment of a musical accompaniment. Milton's sonnet *On His Blindness* would be a rather extreme case in point.

When we come to the more particular consideration of rhythm in lyric poetry, we observe first of all, perhaps, that certain measures common in narrative poetry are conspicuous for their absence. Blank verse, the most important of these, is obviously better suited to the irregularity and eccentricity of narrative or dramatic expression; it is somewhat too heavy, also, and it lacks the feeling of structure that rime and stanza form give to a lyric. And, for somewhat similar reasons, the same can be said of dactylic hexameter, in which Longfellow's *Evangeline* is written. But among the

measures commonly found in lyrics, the same harmony is to be noticed between the mood of the poem and its meter that was found in the case of narrative poems. The point is an important one, and worth more than passing mention.

It would indeed be interesting if some large principle could be found connecting certain forms of rhythm with certain forms of feeling. And when we find the vigorous mood of

Waken, lords and ladies gay,

so admirably expressed in trochaic meter, or the solemnity of Gray's *Elegy* so fittingly expressed in iambic, it might indeed seem possible to arrive at some consistent principle. But it soon appears that the iambic meter that is lively and spirited in

A wet sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast,

has solemnity of movement in

My days among the dead are past.

And the dactylic meter that gives speed and vigor to *The Charge of the Light Brigade* is deliberate and meditative in Hood's poem beginning

One more Unfortunate
Weary of breath.

And so it is necessary to conclude that however strong the tendency may be to associate certain moods with

certain kinds of meter, nevertheless it is more important to realize the flexibility of which any given meter is capable, and to take full account of it in reading. For the most part, then, the meter, with sympathetic reading, is felt to be harmonious with the mood of the poem, though in an undefinable sort of way. Occasionally, however, some special effects are observed, so interesting as to repay a somewhat closer observation.

Shorter lines, introduced here and there among longer, often have an effect of special emphasis. This is so in Shelley's poem *To the Night,* in which the pause and the slower cadence give greater value to the shorter lines,—"Come, long sought," "Soon, too soon." And, in a lighter mood, the unusual emphasis gives an effect of playful anti-climax in *The Last Leaf,* by Holmes:

> But the old three-cornered hat,
> And the breeches, and all that,
> Are so queer!

Moore, in his poem called *Echoes,* by interspersing shorter lines among the longer, reminds us of the reply made by the real echo to the syllables of our longer calling,—

> Yet love hath echoes truer far,
> And far more sweet,
> Than e'er beneath the moonlight's star,
> Of horn, or lute, or soft guitar,
> The songs repeat.

The echoing of sound to sense, known as onomatopœia, finds its most notable instances in the passages where the resemblance is one of pure vowel and consonant tone, as in the famous lines, from Tennyson,

> The moan of doves in immemorable elms,
> And murmuring of innumerable bees.

Shakspere's *It Was a Lover and His Lass* has already been cited, and Milton's sonnet *On the Late Massacre in Piedmont* is too remarkable an example not to be mentioned specially. It is unusual, however, to find an instance so sustained as this; generally it is in the phrase or the line that we meet with an echo of the sense in the sound of the words.

Not alone in the quality of the sound, however, is there found this special effect of echo: the swing of the meter sometimes helps to express definitely the idea of the poem as a whole. In narrative poetry this has been illustrated in the galloping anapests of *How They Brought the Good News.* An instance among lyric poems is the stanza form of Shelley's famous address *To the Skylark.* In this stanza the short trochees of the first part give something of the effect of rapid winging, and the long iambic lines that bring each stanza to a close have a sense of sustained power not unlike that of a bird's soaring:

> Higher still and higher
> From the earth thou springest,
> Like a cloud of fire,
> The blue deep thou wingest,
> And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In this connection Moore's *The Young May Moon* has a point of particular interest. It begins with an iambic line made especially slow by the long unaccented syllables:

> The young May moon is beaming, love,
> The glow-worm's lamp is gleaming, love,

and the effect of drowsy dreaming is well sustained through the beginning of the stanza. But with the sixth line there is an abrupt change in the mood, signaled by the sudden substitution of anapestic feet, with their brisk, wide-awake movement:

> Then awake!—the heavens look bright, my dear,
> 'Tis never too late for delight, my dear,
> And the best of all ways
> To lengthen our days
> Is to steal a few hours from the night, my dear!

To be sensitive to effects of meter such as these quickens our enjoyment of poetry, yet it is well to realize the limitations on their use set by the conditions of literary art. Tone or rhythm may suggest an experience of the senses, but it is not the province of poetry to try to imitate such experience closely. The sound of the words and the swing of the rhythm are truly effective when they simply express the mood of the poem, and help the reader catch its spirit.

It is useful to pause at this point for a moment, to compare the first impression of lyric poetry with that

received in the first reading of the early ballads. The contrast is striking. There the emphasis was on the movement and action of the story—what was called the "objective" side; here it is on the "subjective" side, the expression of human emotion. The stories of the ballads told of events in the tangible world of things; the emotion of the lyric poem, on the other hand, is intangible, and has its seat in the spirit of the singer. But has not the lyric its objective side, too? Is it all spirit and feeling, or is there something that answers to the series of actual events that carry forward the interest of the narrative poem? The question leads to a consideration of

STRUCTURE IN LYRIC POETRY.

Structure of some sort, it readily appears, lyric poetry must have: otherwise it is simply incoherent emotion—no art at all. But this negative statement is not enough; we know that much of the pleasure that a good lyric gives is in the orderly progress of it, its concentrated power, its sense of accomplished finality. What then is this structure in the lyric, corresponding to the chain of events that make up the substance of a narrative poem? The key to the matter lies in the stanza. Structure implies separate parts, and their relation to one another. And in the case of lyrics, of course, the parts are stanzas, each with its own idea, and each, consequently, separate from every other. A poem in which the stanzas relate themselves to each

other in bringing out a larger meaning, then, would furnish a simple illustration of structure in lyric poetry. Such a one is Campbell's *Ye Mariners of England,* in which the maritime glories of England are passed in review. The first stanza is introductory: it addresses itself to those who would be called upon to defend England in another war upon the seas; the spirit it breathes is the thrill of battle and the glory of victory. The three stanzas that complete the poem deal with the three stages of England's naval prowess: first in the past, the memorable days of Blake and Nelson; then in the present, when the country rejoices in her feeling of security; and finally in the future, when men of later times shall celebrate the valiant deeds of England's present defenders. That each step of the poem is complete within the stanza is emphasized by the similar ending of each, as a sort of refrain, or chorus:

> While the stormy winds do blow;
> While the battle rages loud and long
> And the stormy winds do blow.

And the completion of the larger idea is emphasized, and its effect heightened, by the slight change in the ending of the last stanza of all:

> When the storm has ceased to blow;
> When the fiery fight is heard no more,
> And the storm has ceased to blow.

Another poem in which the stanzas are related together according to time order is Wordsworth's *She Was a Phantom of Delight*. The first stanza is the picture of a girl with the elusive charm of youthful gaiety; the second, the same girl grown a woman, the rich sympathy of her nature beginning to appear; the third, the "perfect woman," in all her serene maturity, yet with her earlier mystic charm still upon her. No less interesting is it to observe in both these poems that in a few stanzas may be summed up the whole significance of a nation's naval history or of a complete human life; that the structure of a lyric poem, in other words, helps to bring about the intense concentration of feeling that marks the strongest poems.

Another principle of structure may be observed in the lyrics that focus all their power upon a single utterance at the end. Lovelace, in the lines to Lucasta, sums up a fundamental idea of chivalry in the words,

> I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
> Loved I not Honour more.

But their full significance is realized only in the light of the situation brought out in the first part of the poem,—a lover called away to the wars, who must justify himself against the reproaches of his disappointed mistress. Milton, too, in the beginning of his sonnet on his blindness, tells us the circumstances leading to his anxious self-questioning, after which we

are ready to realize the depth of conviction with which he utters the memorable last line,—

They also serve who only stand and wait.

In nothing does the concentrated unity of lyric feeling more clearly appear than in the relation of the beginning of a poem to its end; and so it becomes interesting to give some special attention to that. In some instances a personal experience is dwelt upon until it acquires the significance of a universal truth; in some, the force of a general law is focused upon an individual experience, vitalizing it and giving it larger meaning. In either case there is development from a lower tone to a higher, from milder, impersonal interest to intensity of spiritual conviction. Bryant's *To a Waterfowl* is an instance. The first stanzas describe the bird, fixed in purpose, steady in flight; further contemplation brings out the aspects in which the bird's life and man's destiny find common ground; and at the end the human feeling has swept away all thought of the physical presence of the bird, and addresses it as a warrant for human trust in the divine. The thought progresses in a similar direction in Holmes's poem, *The Chambered Nautilus*. The shell attracts attention first as a curiously beautiful specimen in natural history; but by degrees the thought is transferred to the wider principle of development stage by stage, until it comes to a climax in the high seriousness of the last stanza, applying the meaning

of the shell's growth to the development of the poet's own soul. The poem of Burns addressed to a field-mouse has a more abrupt transition, but the principle is the same,—first an accidental circumstance, dwelt upon until the mind is familiar with its significant aspect, then the application of the meaning as a large truth bearing upon the human spirit. Wordsworth's *Ode to Duty* is somewhat different: its beginning is general and impersonal; but soon the personal note enters, and by the last stanza the feeling has changed to one of deep concern to the poet himself.

It would be unfair to dismiss this part of the subject without saying that there is of course a wide difference in the closeness with which the stanzas of lyric poems are bound to a certain principle of order. In some poems, in fact, like Lamb's *Old Familiar Faces,* or *A Boy's Song,* by James Hogg, the stanzas seem to stand separate, independent of any strict principle of order; but even in these there can be felt an increase of emotional stress, and this sense of climax is itself a fair substitute for a more rigid principle of arrangement.

Structure, then, the lyrics have, and must have, just as much as the narrative poems. In fact, structure of one kind or another is necessary in all art, whether it be painting, sculpture, literature, or music. That, however, is too large a matter to go into here: what space is left must be devoted to an important inquiry that underlies all that has thus far been said about lyric poetry. Lyrics, it has been shown, express hu-

man emotion. But emotions, as they come to us, are formless, chaotic, vague. Why is it that the expression of them, then, does not necessarily take on this same character? What has prepared them for the more definite structural treatment that has been noted? The answer brings the discussion back to the most fundamental matter of all,—

THE ELEMENTS OF LYRIC POETRY.

The elements are two,—emotion and imagery; the first the subject of lyric poetry, the second its expression. With regard to the first, it must be clear that however formless and vague emotions may be as they come and go in our experience, after there has been selection among them, and a strict subordination to one dominant mood, they are no longer chaotic, but ready for artistic expression, single, simple, and direct. Wordsworth's *The Daffodils,* which we are told grew out of a personal experience, illustrates how this can be. Many feelings come to us in a solitary ramble in the country, thoughts and moods related to all sorts of accidental circumstances. And many sights arrest our attention, some impressing us more, some less, depending very much on our changing mood. Now in Wordsworth's poem, no account is taken of the many accidental shiftings of interest, but one prevailing mood is described, and that very clearly—a sort of vacant loneliness, in which the mind, not seriously preoccupied with its own concerns, is sensitive and open to

impressions coming from without. And of such impressions only one is recorded,—the vision of the daffodils,—and this, the central experience of the day's aimless wanderings, becomes the single source of pleasure, not for the one day only, but whenever the original mood chances to return, and the experience is repeated in the memory.

To use yet another illustration, one who cares for the sea knows it in many aspects, and the thought of it brings to him a confusion of recollections connected with all sorts of individual circumstances. But there is nothing of accidental circumstance, no confusion of moods, in Cunningham's fine old song, *A Wet Sheet and Flowing Sea;* the feeling is single, as if distilled out of many experiences; it is also simple and direct.

Yet however simple and direct our emotion may be, it is always in itself an intangible thing. It is to be sure the spirit of the poem, giving it life, but the spirit needs a tangible body in order to make the kind of appeal that all art makes to us—through the senses. That body is imagery; and it is well worth while to consider how it links together the intangible spirit that dwells within and the sense impressions that make that spirit felt.

To begin at once with an example, there is patriotism, the love of country,—about as abstract a thing as can well be imagined, as is seen when we try to define what we mean by the country we love. How can poetry express this intangible emotion? Not, certainly, in abstract terms. But love of country is asso-

ciated, for one thing, with a multitude of experiences of sight and sound and smell,—other things too, but they may be disregarded for the present. Browning, while spending April away from his own country, recalls the familiar sights and sounds of April in England, and records them in a poem; to what end? Certainly not for the mere beauty of the description, beautiful though it be; nor as a hymn to abstract Nature. The title points to the true answer,—*Home Thoughts.* All natural beauty, in all places, makes its appeal to the true singer, and Browning was sensitive to beauty wherever he found it; but for the present he is thinking only of that which was familiar in his own home country,—" In England—now! "

That is, of course, but one aspect of patriotism, and is another illustration of the singleness of the lyric mood; other aspects have been expressed in other ways. Moore, for example, sings that passionate love that devotes life and death to the country's service, and deems the greatest sacrifice the purest pleasure. The poem that expresses this is *Pro Patria Mori;* and a superficial reading might take it as the outpouring of passionate devotion from a lover to his loved one. But it is, of course, to his native country—Patria—that the lover dedicates himself; his country becomes tangible to the imagination when conceived of as a woman, that the poet, in terms of personal devotion, may bring home the intensity of his ardor.

In these examples, then, some idea may appear of what is meant by " imagery: " simply the familiar idea

of the figure of speech more widely applied. It calls out a response because it brings to the mind pictures, experiences, memories, impressions of the senses,—all the tangible associations of deep or vivid feeling. And so, although imagery includes figures of speech, however simple or elaborate they may be, it includes much more,—the whole setting of a lyric, its time and place, the choice of its representative characters, its personified conceptions, its visualized action—all that brings feeling from the realm of the abstract to the concrete, that makes intangible conceptions tangible.

At this point, where the brief outline as to what characterizes lyric poetry is about completed, it is interesting to turn once more to the conclusions regarding narrative poetry, and to ask what are the final results. The differences between the two kinds are at first glance most obvious,—the fact that the narrative begins with the story and then brings out its emotional significance, whereas the lyric begins with the emotion, and finds an appropriate expression in time and circumstance. Fully to realize this difference helps to clarify our thought regarding the two types of poetry, and to distinguish between one element and another in a single poem of either type. But more important than the differences are the likenesses; and more significant than what distinguishes them as separate types, is what unites them as poetry. For after all, that is our main concern—what poetry, in its essence, is.

What is, poetry, then? The question is too large

to answer finally here. Other forms, the drama and the epic, would have to be included, and a wide experience of life and art be presupposed. Yet in the material already at hand tendencies may be observed, and in their direction it is safe to look for the larger answer. The first thing that appears is that poetry takes for its subject human life,—not life in its abstract aspects, however, its scientific theories and speculative problems, but life in the concrete, as it touches the feelings—human experience and human aspiration. In our outlook on the world we have minds to think with and hearts to feel with. Poetry is not without its intellectual side; but primarily its appeal is to the heart.

And next it is seen that poetry, finding the experiences and emotions of life confused by accidental circumstance, selects what it chooses to deal with, arranges its parts, emphasizes what is significant. The result is concentration and a sense of power. Incidents are shorn of their haphazard features, and their meaning stands out clear; feelings are simplified, and related clearly to their cause. Poetry, in this sense, brings order out of the life with which it deals.

Finally, poetry presents its message in terms of beauty. It charms the ear with its sound, and stimulates the other senses with its imagery. On the side of diction we get the sense of the inevitable word, and on that of meter the one appropriate music. The heart responds readily to the touch of beauty; and so through a poem's charm of style we approach most

directly and with most open sympathy the full meaning it is to have for us.

Only when poetry is thus considered in its larger aspects can the term "universal," as commonly applied to it, be fully understood. Any given action is in itself merely an individual fact, and any given feeling is no more than a personal experience. But when the action or the feeling is freed of its accidental circumstances, and its inner significance is allowed to appear, and especially when this meaning is expressed in terms of permanent beauty, the range of its interest increases until it includes all those who can share in it. We need not be Frenchmen to thrill to the story of Napoleon's wounded messenger, nor need we be Scotchmen to respond to the ringing appeal of Bruce in his address at Bannockburn. Love of freedom, admiration for loyalty in a high cause,—these things belong to our common human nature, and bind in common sympathy all loyal hearts, of whatever country and of whatever time. That is the secret of all great poetry, of the breadth as well as the depth of its appeal.

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